

# Explorations

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# Explorations

*Reading*

*Thinking*

*Discussion*

*Writing*

*Englewood Cliffs, N.J.*

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Thomas Clark Pollock, *Editor*

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# Preface: On Using This Book

Liberal education involves both exploration and development. Primarily through reading, the student explores the realms of knowledge and wisdom and considers the relevance of what he finds there to his own developing life, and through thinking about what he has read, discussing it with others, and stating his ideas clearly in writing, he develops his own ability to think and to communicate his thought.

*Explorations* is designed as a tool for liberal education. Its method is indicated by the sequence in the subtitle: *Reading—Thinking—Discussion—Writing*. Reading leads to thinking, which leads to discussion and writing. In other words, good discussion and writing proceed from good reading and thinking.

The principle on which the individual readings have been selected is suggested by the title—*Explorations*. The readings help the student to explore major areas of human experience which are important in his own personal development—in his own liberal education. In turn, these explorations through reading stimulate thinking, discussion and writing.

The selections have been chosen, not only because they are worth reading and are examples of good writing in their own right, but also because they provoke thought and discussion, both as individual essays and in the clash of their ideas with the ideas expressed by other writers on the same topic.

Section I, "On Education and Thinking," contains two chapters. The first includes six selections which direct the student's attention to problems of *Education* in relation to himself, to society, and to problems of human value. The second chapter, *Thinking Straight*, invites the student to consider some of the most important aspects of thinking, both creative and critical.

Section II, "On Language, Art, and Communication," has four chapters. The first is directly concerned with *Language and Good Writing*—especially with good writing of the practical sort which will be ex-



pected of the student and the businessman. The second considers *The Language of Literature*. The third presents four selections dealing with *The Language of Art*, as found especially in painting, music, motion pictures, and photography. The fourth gives the student the opportunity to think seriously about *Mass Media of Communication*. If there be any teachers who believe that a student should not be encouraged to think, both sympathetically and critically, about the mass media of communication which are an omnipresent reality in his world, the editors of this anthology are not among them. In this chapter Richard D. Altick discusses the problems of reading newspapers, John Crosby analyzes the seven deadly sins of the air, Al Capp, the creator of Li'l Abner, deals with comic strips and the comic spirit in America, and Budd Schulberg considers the position of movies in America after fifty years, adding a postscript especially for this anthology.

Section III contains five chapters "On Science and Social Science." The first deals realistically and directly with *Science*, not as something to be worshipped or abhorred, but as a specialized form of human activity. It gives the student an opportunity to think about what science is, what its values are, the fact that science can sometimes be silly, and 'The Origin of the Scientific Species'—a sociological analysis of American scientists as a class. The second opens avenues of exploration in *Economics and Politics*. The third deals with *The Scientific Study of Man*, encouraging the student both to understand the anthropological approach to the study of human behavior and to analyze some of its basic assumptions in the light of other ideas about the nature of man. The fourth directs attention to the problem of *Civilization and Cycles*, asking students to think seriously about, for example, the meaning of civilization, and the question, "Does History Repeat Itself?" The fifth chapter in this section, dealing with *The West and the World*, focuses attention on problems of international relations which the student must consider seriously if he is to be an educated man in the latter half of the twentieth century.

The last section, 'On Maturity,' contains four chapters which challenge the student to think searchingly about the problems of his own personal, social, and spiritual growth. The first, concerning *Courtship, Marriage, and the Family*, presents an analysis of the dating pattern among American undergraduates, together with thoughtful considera-

tions of problems of marriage and the family which the student is very likely to meet soon, if indeed he has not already met them. The second includes three articles on *Maturity* to give the student an opportunity to think about what it means to be truly mature. The third focuses attention on problems of *Emotional Health and Good Personal Relations*. The fourth and last encourages the student to consider seriously from various points of view the challenge of spiritual and *Ethical Values*.

Each selection is followed by three groups of questions or directions which are designed to help the student and the teacher proceed as directly as possible toward the goals of the course.

First, *FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE* focuses attention on the reading itself. What does the author actually say? In what order does he present his ideas? How does he emphasize his major points? Is this illustration he uses effective? What does he mean by that statement? Questions of rhetoric like these are raised to help the student discover how well he has understood what he has read and the way in which it was written. At every turn he should test the essay for consistency, for good reasoning, and for the unstated assumptions on which it is based.

Second, questions are suggested for discussion to stimulate the student to think about ideas in the selection in relation to other relevant ideas and experiences. The purpose of these questions is to bring the reader, or group of readers, to consider various applications of the ideas in the selection, and to test these ideas by seeing whether they apply to specific situations—always the proper test of any theory. Such discussion can be extended indefinitely, the readings will open many pathways for active thought.

Third, *TOPICS FOR WRITING* are presented, not to limit the student to particular subjects, but to suggest approaches to writing which may lead to interesting themes. The topics for writing are not necessarily titles for the themes, rather, each one suggests to the student that he might write something like this himself. Thus these topics may start an active train of thought moving in the student. Having done so, they leave him free to write on the topic which appeals to him most. This will usually be something he knows much about—and he will probably have something interesting to say because the article he has just read

and discussed will have thrown new light on his own experience and moved him to fashion new patterns from familiar materials—which is a very important part of the process by which the mind is enriched and becomes mature.

In general, the three groups of topics for study, discussion, and writing are not intended or presented as mechanical exercises, but instead have been carefully prepared to lead to critical reading, searching discussion, and good writing.

The teacher is free to take up any one of the essays at any time—the three groups of topics just mentioned are presented immediately after each individual essay. The fifteen groups of selections or “chapters” in this book are, however, so arranged that the teacher is likely to find value in having the students read all the selections in a particular chapter and discuss a number of them before he writes; and there is a helpful logic in the order in which the chapters are grouped in the four major sections.

The many selections in this anthology are, as we have said, worth reading for themselves; exploring them carefully would be a valuable part of anyone’s liberal education. However, their greatest value in an English course will be found, the editors believe, if they are read not merely for whatever valuable knowledge or opinions the individual authors have presented, but even more for the stimulation they can give the student to think about the ideas they set forth and the way they are written, and—most important—to clarify and develop his own ideas through discussion first and then through writing. To this end *Explorations* is dedicated.

T. C. P.  
J. L. W.  
F. R.  
S. B.

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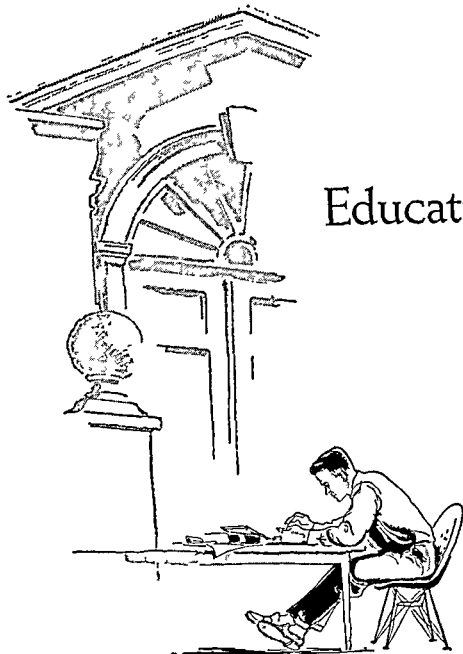
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PART I: *On Education and Thinking*

*Chapter One*

# Education



**THE DIRECTION IN WHICH EDUCATION STARTS  
A MAN WILL DETERMINE HIS FUTURE LIFE**

**PLATO**

## Introduction

Not long ago a Freshman English class in a large university finished reading an essay which described a rather foolish girl on the porch of an expensive hotel discussing her college courses. During the discussion of the essay which followed, one of the students asked the instructor, "What was that girl doing in college?" The instructor, who also believed that the girl might be better off elsewhere, asked, "Why shouldn't she be?" "Because," replied the student, "she already had enough money."

This student obviously believed that the purpose of a college education was to teach students to earn money, to train young men and women for a good job. The vast majority of the students also believed this. So apparently did the majority of the faculty and trustees, for most of the courses offered by the university were "practical courses," offering specific training in a number of highly diversified fields. If we are to determine the purpose of a college education simply by reviewing the courses offered by most colleges, we shall be led to one conclusion: a college education trains a young man or woman for a job—a job which he or she could probably not get without going to college.

Most American colleges are in the thick of the controversy which results from the question: Should a college education prepare one to earn a living or to live? Should colleges prepare their students for work—one part of life—or for the whole of life itself? Should colleges develop the intellect and wisdom—or skills and aptitudes?

Recognizing, on the one hand, that in a world of specialists a young person needs special training, and that in a confused and complicated society a young person needs a developed, flexible intellect and inquiring mind, most colleges have compromised. A student takes a few general courses in art, history, philosophy and science and then devotes the rest of his schedule to his "major"—specialization in forestry, police administration, home economics, and so on.

Many students will say they came to college to become an engineer, a doctor, a lab technician, or an accountant. Many others will say they came to "get an education." A few outspoken coeds will say

they came to get a husband Whatever their obvious reasons, however, nearly all students are looking for a really satisfying answer to the question, "Why go to college?" Most students still want to know, that is, how to become educated

The various reasons students have for coming to college constitutes one problem in education There are many others The number of young people of school and college age is greatly increasing, and the proportion of them attending college is increasing even more rapidly International tension and its resultant fears have tended to silence controversy, stifle intellectual dissension, and threaten personal and social freedom everywhere, most visibly, perhaps, where they ought to be most active—the classroom Progressive educational methods have frequently replaced traditional methods of education, with, according to many critics, a resulting relaxation of discipline and training Schools and colleges are in desperate need of funds, but the US citizenry chooses to spend more money on tobacco than on education Intercollegiate athletics have ballooned into a major source of entertainment and, in the minds of many, now play far too important a role

The problems arising from these facts are obvious, and it is the purpose of this section of the book to introduce you to some of them, and to present some stimulating complaints, some constructive suggestions, and some possible standards The problems of education are not, it is to be hoped, insoluble, but they do not have an easy or simple solution, and no one solution is indicated Educational problems in their range and complexity reflect the range and complexity of our society They cannot be considered in a vacuum Each of the writers in this chapter makes this explicitly clear Lippmann, for example, relates education to the total change in the world picture in this century, Bell is acutely conscious of our present lack of social and religious values, Douglas writes about the need for the whole man None of the essayists in this group offers specific answers to your particular educational problems, they offer no practical curriculum suggestions Their concerns are deeper They see education as ultimately you must see it as a major social force But their concern is also individual They all desire a richer and fuller life for the in

dividual, they hope that education will achieve this, and they depict ways in which it may

Walter Lippmann, for many years one of our most thoughtful journalists and authors, in his essay "Shortage in Education" perceives a much greater problem than merely that of overcrowded classrooms and overworked teachers. He recognizes the need for basic changes in our attitudes and in our planning, changes that concern you more as a member of the community than as a student. He should arouse in you a desire to evaluate your own notions about education and your own plan for a college career.

John Henry Newman is a classic writer on education, a man whose style is as lucid as his thinking. His essay "What is a University?" is included here not only for its persuasive definition, but also as an example of masterful nineteenth century prose. Newman's essay reemphasizes the importance of the personal element in an education.

Monroe Deutsch, a scholar and university administrator, speaks clearly and honestly of a problem that seldom seems to concern students directly, academic freedom. Academic freedom has little meaning for the average freshman and Deutsch's definition and assertions should prove most illuminating, for the teacher's freedom is a guarantee of the student's freedom, a guarantee that what the student learns will be knowledge unfettered by dogma or fear. Mr. Deutsch, writing as an administrator, is eminently practical and moderate in his view of this subject, his stand is one that may offend the radical and the ultraconservative alike. You may wish to argue with him and with other essayists in the anthology, and it is hoped that you will.

Bernard Iddings Bell, a provocative cleric, may anger you in his essay "Know How vs. Know Why." He is positive to the point of being dogmatic, thoroughly convinced of the virtues of traditional training and thorough discipline. A reading of his essay should lead you to reexamine your own schooling and your contemplated college program, not with the aim of condemnation but of healthy evaluation. The basic focus here is upon the controversy between "traditional" and "progressive" education and may lead you to further research and thought.

Paul Douglas embodies a somewhat rare combination: he is both an

accomplished writer and the holder of a public office. His examination of basic values in "Culture and Character" may perplex you at first and may cater to your own prejudices, for he might seem to be favoring the man of action as opposed to the dreamer. Careful reading of his essay will reveal that he is doing no such thing. In Douglas' article as in many others in this book, there are many references to men and books which may be unknown to you. Rather than allowing this to irritate or stump you, realize that it may be you, not the author, who is "at fault" and plan to read about these men and read their works as part of the process of becoming educated, cultured, and mature.

Harold W. Stoke, college president and dean, deals very realistically and perhaps shockingly with the controversy that rages over football. All of us are concerned with college athletics and their attendant problems and we respond immediately to the subject. Stoke's solutions are provocative and perhaps not likely to be adopted, but they should be of real interest to you. Unlike the other essays in this section whose concern is with deeper, lasting problems, Stoke's discussion is immediate and practical.

The problems of education, of its relation to society and to human values, will long be with us. These essays offer only an introduction to a vast field.



## WALTER LIPPMANN

born 1889 educated at Harvard has been associate editor of The New Republic and editor of the New York World He is now a special writer for the New York Herald Tribune and other newspapers In addition he has written many articles for leading magazines and is the author of a number of books on public affairs Among these are Public Opinion, A Preface to Morals, The Good Society, Isolation and Alliances, and Essays on the Public Philosophy [The Shortage in Education, Copyright 1954 by The Atlantic Monthly Company, Boston 16, Massachusetts]

### *The Shortage in Education*

#### *I*

What I am going to say is the result of a prolonged exposure to the continuing crisis of our western society—to the crisis of the democratic governments and of free institutions during the wars and revolutions of the twentieth century Now it does not come easily to anyone who, like me, has breathed the soft air of the world before the wars that began in 1914—who has known a world that was not divided and frightened and full of hate—it does not come easily to such a man to see clearly and to measure coolly the times we live in The scale and scope and the complexity of our needs are without any precedent in our experience, and indeed, we may fairly say, in all human experience

In 1900 men everywhere on earth acknowledged, even when they resented, the leadership of the western nations It was taken for granted that the liberal democracies were showing the way towards the good life in the good society, and few had any doubts of the eventual, but certain, progress of all mankind towards more democracy and a wider freedom

The only question was when—the question was never whether—the less fortunate and the more backward peoples of the world would have learned to use not only the technology of the West but also the political institutions of the West All would soon be learning to decide the issues which divided them by free and open and rational discussion, they would soon learn how to conduct free and honest elections, to administer justice Mankind would come to accept and comprehend the idea that all men are equally under the laws and all men must have the equal protection of the laws

At the beginning of this century the acknowledged model of a new government, even in Russia, was a liberal democracy in the British or the

French or the American style Think what has happened to the western world and to its ideas and ideals during the forty years since the World Wars began The hopes that men then took for granted are no longer taken for granted The institutions and the way of life which we have inherited, and which we cherish, have lost their paramount, their almost undisputed, hold upon the allegiance and the affections and the hopes of the peoples of the earth They are no longer universally accepted as being the right way towards the good life on this earth They are fiercely challenged abroad, they are widely doubted and they are dangerously violated even here at home

During this half century the power of the western democratic nations has been declining Their influence upon the destiny of the great masses of people has been shrinking We are the heirs of the proudest tradition of government in the history of mankind Yet we no longer find ourselves talking now—as we did before the First World War—about the progress of liberal democracy among the awakening multitudes We are talking now about the defense and the survival of liberal democracy in its contracted area

We are living in an age of disorder and upheaval Though the United States has grown powerful and rich, we know in our hearts that we have become, at the same time, insecure and anxious Our people enjoy an abundance of material things, such as no large community of men has ever known But our people are not happy about their position or confident about their future For we are not sure whether our responsibilities are not greater than our power and our wisdom

We have been raised to the first place in the leadership of the western society at a time when the general civilization of the West has suffered a spectacular decline and is gravely threatened We, who have become so suddenly the protecting and the leading power of that civilization, are not clear and united among ourselves about where we are going and how we should deal with our unforeseen responsibilities, our unwanted mission, our unexpected duties

It is an awe-inspiring burden that we find ourselves compelled to bear We have suddenly acquired responsibilities for which we were not prepared—for which we are not now prepared—for which, I am very much afraid, we are not now preparing ourselves

We have had, and probably we must expect for a long time to have, dangerous and implacable enemies But if we are to revive and recover, and are to go forward again, we must not look for the root of the trouble in our adversaries We must look for it in ourselves We must rid ourselves of the poison of self-pity We must have done with the falsehood that all would be well were it not that we are the victims of wicked and designing men

In 1914, when the decline of the West began, no one had heard of Lenin, Trotsky, Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung. We have not fallen from our pre-eminence because we have been attacked. It would be much truer to say, and it is nobler to say it, that we have been attacked because our capacity to cope with our tasks had begun to decline.

We shall never have the spirit to revive and to recover so long as we try to console ourselves by shutting our eyes, and by wringing our hands and beating our breasts and filling the air with complaints that we have been weakened because we were attacked, and that we have been making mistakes because we were betrayed.

We must take the manly view, which is that the failure of the western democracies during this catastrophic half of the twentieth century is due to the failings of the democratic peoples. They have been attacked and brought down from their pre-eminence because they have lacked the clarity of purpose and the resolution of mind and of heart to cope with the accumulating disasters and disorders. They have lacked the clarity of purpose and the resolution of mind and of heart to prevent the wars that have ruined the West, to prepare for these wars they could not prevent, and, having won them at last after exorbitant sacrifice and at a ruinous cost, to settle those wars and to restore law and order upon the face of the globe.

## 2

I have said all this because it is only in the context of our era that we can truly conceive the problem of educating the American democracy. When we do that, we must, I believe, come to see that the effort we are making to educate ourselves as a people is not nearly equal to our needs and to our responsibilities.

If we compare our total effort—in public and private schools, and from kindergarten through college—with what it was fifty years ago, the quantitative increase is impressive. We are offering much more schooling of a more expensive kind to very many more pupils. By every statistical measure, the United States has made striking quantitative progress during the past century towards the democratic goal of universal education. The typical young American is spending more years in school than his father or grandfather; a much higher proportion of young people are going to high school and beyond, and more dollars—even discounting the depreciation of the dollar—are being spent for each person's education.

Now, if it were no more difficult to live in the United States today than it was fifty years ago, that is to say, if life were as simple as it was then—

if the problems of private and community life were as easily understood—if the task of governing the United States at home and of conducting its foreign relations abroad were as uncomplicated as and no more dangerous than it was fifty years ago—then we could celebrate, we could be happy, we could be congratulating ourselves that we are making great progress in the task of educating ourselves as a democracy

But we cannot make that comforting comparison without deceiving ourselves seriously. We cannot measure the demands upon our people in the second half of the twentieth century—the demands in terms of trained intelligence, moral discipline, knowledge, and, not least, the wisdom of great affairs—by what was demanded of them at the beginning of the first half of this century. The burden of living in America today and of governing America today is very much heavier than it was fifty years ago, and the crucial question is whether the increase of our effort in education is keeping up with the increase in the burden.

When we use this standard of comparison, we must find, I submit, that the increase in our effort to educate ourselves is of a quite different—and of a very much smaller—order of magnitude than is the increase in what is demanded of us in this divided and dangerous world. Our educational effort and our educational needs are not now anywhere nearly in balance. The supply is not nearly keeping up with the demand. The burden of the task is very much heavier than is the strength of the effort. There is a very serious and dangerous deficit between the output of education and our private and public need to be educated.

How can we measure this discrepancy? I am sorry to say that I shall have to use a few figures, trusting that none of you will think that when I use them, I am implying that all things can be measured in dollars and cents. I am using the figures because there is no other way to illustrate concretely the difference in the two orders of magnitude—the difference between what we do to educate ourselves, on the one hand, and on the other hand, what the kind of world we live in demands of us.

What shall we use as a measure of our educational effort? For the purpose of the comparison, I think we may take the total expenditure per capita, first in 1900, and then about half a century later, in 1953, on public and private schools from kindergarten through college.

And as a measure of the burden of our task—of the responsibilities and of the commitments to which education has now to be addressed—we might take Federal expenditures per capita, first in 1900, and then in our time, half a century later.

We differ among ourselves, of course, as to whether we are spending too much, too little, or the right amount on defense and on the public services. But these differences do not seriously affect the argument. For all of us, or nearly all of us, are agreed on the general size and the scope

of the necessary tasks of the modern Federal government, both in military defense and for civilian purposes. Between the highest and the lowest proposals of responsible and informed men, I doubt that the difference is as much as 20 per cent. That is not a great enough difference to affect the point I am making. That point is that the size of the public expenditure reflects—roughly, of course, but nevertheless fundamentally—the scale and scope of what we are impelled and compelled to do. It registers our judgment on the problems which we must cope with.

Now, in 1900, the educational effort, measured in expenditures per capita, was \$3.40. The task, as measured by Federal expenditure per capita, was \$6.85. What we must be interested in is, I submit, the ratio between these two figures. We find, then, that in 1900 the nation put out \$1 of educational effort against \$2 of public task.

How is it now, half a century or so later? In 1953, the educational effort was at the rate of about \$76 per capita. Federal expenditures, including defense, had risen to \$467 per capita. The ratio of educational effort to public task, which in 1900 was one to two, had fallen, a half century later, to a ratio of one to six.

Perhaps I should pause at this point for a parenthesis to say, for those who may be thinking how much the value of the dollar has depreciated since 1900, that I am aware of that, but for the purposes of this comparison, it makes no difference. For while the dollar was worth probably three times as much in 1900 as in 1953, we are interested only in the relative effort in 1900 and 1953. The ratio would be the same if we divided the 1953 expenditures by three or if we multiplied the 1900 expenditures by three.

You have now heard all the statistics I shall use. The two ratios—the one at the beginning of our rise to the position of the leading great power of the world, and the other the ratio a half century later, when we carry the enormous burden abroad and at home—these two ratios show that the effort we are now making to educate ourselves has fallen in relation to our needs.

### 3

I must now remind you that this disparity between the educational effort and the public task is in fact greater than the figures suggest. For in this half century there has been a momentous change in the structure of American society, and it has added greatly to the burden upon the schools.

The responsibility of the schools for educating the new generation has become very much more comprehensive than it used to be. Ever so much more is now demanded of the schools. For they are expected to perform

many of the educational functions which used to be performed by the family, the settled community, the church, the family business, the family farm, the family trade

This is a very big subject in itself—much too big for me here—except to mention it as a reminder that the comparison between our real educational effort and our real public need is less favorable than the figures of one to two in 1900, as against one to six today. For the school today has a much larger role to play in the whole process of education than it needed to play in the older American society.

Can it be denied that the educational effort is inadequate? I think it cannot be denied. I do not mean that we are doing a little too little. I mean that we are doing much too little. We are entering upon an era which will test to the utmost the capacity of our democracy to cope with the gravest problem of modern times, and on a scale never yet attempted in all the history of the world. We are entering upon this difficult and dangerous period with what I believe we must call a growing deficit in the quantity and the quality of American education.

There is compelling proof that we are operating at an educational deficit. It is to be found in many of the controversies within the educational system. I am not myself, of course, a professional educator. But I do some reading about education, and I have been especially interested in the problem of providing education for the men and women who must perform the highest functions in our society—the elucidation and the articulation of its ideals, the advancement of knowledge, the making of high policy in the government, and the leadership of the people.

How are we discussing this problem? Are we, as we ought to be doing, studying what are the subjects and what are the disciplines which are needed for the education of the gifted children for the leadership of the nation? That is not the main thing we are discussing. We are discussing whether we can afford to educate our leaders when we have so far to go before we have *done* what we should do to provide equal opportunities for all people.

Most of the argument—indeed the whole issue—of whether to address the effort in education to the average of ability or to the higher capacities derives from the assumption that we have to make that choice. But why do we have to choose? Why are we not planning to educate everybody as much as everybody can be educated, some much more and some less than others?

This alleged choice is forced upon us only because our whole educational effort is too small. If we were not operating at a deficit level, our working ideal would be the fullest opportunity for all—each child according to its capacity. It is the deficit in our educational effort which compels us to deny to the children fitted for leadership of the nation the

opportunity to become educated for that task.

So we have come to the point where we must lift ourselves as promptly as we can to a new and much higher level of interest, of attention, of hard work, of care, of concern, of expenditure, and of dedication to the education of the American people.

We have to do in the educational system something very like what we have done in the military establishment during the past fifteen years. We have to make a breakthrough to a radically higher and broader conception of what is needed and of what can be done. Our educational effort today, what we think we can afford, what we think we can do, how we feel entitled to treat our schools and our teachers—all of that—is still in approximately the same position as was the military effort of this country before Pearl Harbor.

In 1940 our armed forces were still at a level designed for a policy of isolation in this hemisphere and of neutrality in any war across the two oceans. Today, the military establishment has been raised to a different and higher plateau, and the effort that goes into it is enormously greater than it was in 1940.

Our educational effort, on the other hand, has not yet been raised to the plateau of the age we live in. I am not saying, of course, that we should spend 40 billions on education because we spend that much on defense. I am saying that we must make the same order of radical change in our attitude as we have made in our attitude towards defense. We must measure our educational effort as we do our military effort. That is to say, we must measure it not by what it would be easy and convenient to do, but by what it is necessary to do in order that the nation may survive and flourish. We have learned that we are quite rich enough to defend ourselves, whatever the cost. We must now learn that we are quite rich enough to educate ourselves as we need to be educated.

There is an enormous margin of luxury in this country against which we can draw for our vital needs. We take that for granted when we think of the national defense. From the tragedies and the bitter experience of being involved in wars for which we were inadequately prepared, we have acquired the will to defend ourselves. And, having done that, having acquired the will, we have found the way. We know how to find the dollars that are needed to defend ourselves, even if we must do without some thing else that is less vitally important.

In education we have not yet acquired that kind of will. But we need to acquire it, and we have no time to lose. We must acquire it in this decade. For if, in the crucial years which are coming, our people remain as unprepared as they are for their responsibilities and their mission, they may not be equal to the challenge, and if they do not succeed, they may never have a second chance to try.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Lippmann does not mention education in his introduction. How then does the introduction relate to his principal arguments?
- 2 What are some of the differences in Western "ideas and ideals" of 1900 and 1950?
- 3 Why have the Western democracies failed, according to Lippmann, in the first half of this century?
- 4 What were some of the educational needs formerly met by family, community, church, and so forth, now met by the schools?
- 5 Outline the basic, simple structure of Lippmann's thesis.
- 6 Why, despite greatly increased expenditures, is American education inadequate?
- 7 How does Lippmann measure our educational effort today as compared to that of 1900?
- 8 Why is the deficit in education greater than Lippmann's figures indicate?
- 9 What must we do in order to get the education required to meet our needs?
- 10 How does Lippmann use the analogy between the military establishment and education to develop his thesis?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Do you agree (or not) that it is nobler to attribute our failures to our own inadequacies than to "wicked and designing men"? Why?
- 2 In the light of Lippmann's comments, should everyone in the United States go on to some form of education beyond high school? Why or why not?
- 3 In discussing desirable kinds of education, should the needs of the individual or of society be paramount? Why?
- 4 What in your opinion are some of the principal characteristics of an education for life in the modern world?
- 5 What can the individual citizen do to improve education in the United States?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 The importance of education in a democracy
- 2 My personal educational goals
- 3 Family life as an educational experience
- 4 Where my high-school education failed (or succeeded)
- 5 Education for 1960



## JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

(1801-1890) was ordained in the Church of England and became one of the leaders of the Oxford Movement within that church. His concern over matters of doctrine led him to become a Roman Catholic, and eventually he was made a Cardinal. His famous autobiography *Apologia pro Vita Sua* is a defense of his action in leaving the Church of England. Among his other books are *Lyra Apostolica* and *The Dream of Gerontius*, books of poetry, and *The Idea of a University*. This article was taken from his *Rise and Progress of Universities*.

### *What Is a University?*

If I were asked to describe as briefly and popularly as I could, what a University was, I should draw my answer from its ancient designation of a *Studium Generale* or 'School of Universal Learning'. This description implies the assemblage of strangers from all parts in one spot — from all parts, else, how will you find professors and students for every department of knowledge? and in one spot else, how can there be any school at all? Accordingly, in its simple and rudimental form, it is a school of knowledge of every kind, consisting of teachers and learners from every quarter. Many things are requisite to complete and satisfy the idea embodied in this description, but such as this a University seems to be in its essence, a place for the communication and circulation of thought, by means of personal intercourse, through a wide extent of country.

There is nothing far-fetched or unreasonable in the idea thus presented to us, and if this be a University, then a University does but contemplate a necessity of our nature, and is but one specimen in a particular medium, out of many which might be adduced in others, of a provision for that necessity. Mutual education in a large sense of the word, is one of the great and incessant occupations of human society, carried on partly with set purpose, and partly not. One generation forms another; and the existing generation is ever acting and reacting upon itself in the persons of its individual members. Now, in this process, books, I need scarcely say, that is, the *litera scripta* are one special instrument. It is true, and emphatically so in this age. Considering the prodigious powers of the press, and how they are developed at this time in the never intermitting issue of periodicals, tracts, pamphlets, works in series, and light literature, we must allow there never was a time which promised fairer for dispensing with every other means of information and instruction. What can we want more, you will say, for the intellectual education of the whole man.

and for every man, than so exuberant and diversified and persistent a promulgation of all kinds of knowledge? Why, you will ask, need we go up to knowledge, when knowledge comes down to us? The Sibyl wrote her prophecies upon the leaves of the forest, and wasted them, but here such careless profusion might be prudently indulged, for it can be afforded without loss, in consequence of the almost fabulous fecundity of the instrument which these latter ages have invented. We have sermons in stones, and books in the running brooks, works larger and more comprehensive than those which have gained for ancients an immortality, issue forth every morning, and are projected onwards to the ends of the earth at the rate of hundreds of miles a day. Our seats are strewed, our pavements are powdered, with swarms of little tracts, and the very bricks of our city walls preach wisdom, by informing us by their placards where we can at once cheaply purchase it.

I allow all this, and much more, such certainly is our popular education, and its effects are remarkable. Nevertheless, after all, even in this age, whenever men are really serious about getting what, in the language of trade, is called "a good article," when they aim at something precise, something refined, something really luminous, something really large, something choice, they go to another market, they avail themselves, in some shape or other, of the rival method, the ancient method, of oral instruction, of present communication between man and man, of teachers instead of learning, of the personal influence of a master, and the humble initiation of a disciple, and, in consequence, of great centres of pilgrimage and throng, which such a method of education necessarily involves. This, I think, will be found to hold good in all those departments or aspects of society, which possess an interest sufficient to bind men together, or to constitute what is called "a world." It holds in the political world, and in the high world, and in the religious world, and it holds also in the literary and scientific world.

If the actions of men may be taken as any test of their convictions, then we have reason for saying this, viz.—that the province and the inestimable benefit of the *littera scripta* is that of being a record of truth, and an authority of appeal, and an instrument of teaching in the hands of a teacher, but that, if we wish to become exact and fully furnished in any branch of knowledge which is diversified and complicated, we must consult the living man and listen to his living voice. I am not bound to investigate the cause of this, and anything I may say will, I am conscious, be short of its full analysis—perhaps we may suggest, that no books can get through the number of minute questions which it is possible to ask on any extended subject, or can hit upon the very difficulties which are severally felt by each reader in succession. Or again, that no book can convey the special spirit and delicate peculiarities of its subject with that rapidity and certainty which attend on the sympathy of mind with mind,

through the eyes, the look, the accent, and the manner, in casual expressions thrown off at the moment, and the unstudied turns of familiar conversation. But I am already dwelling too long on what is but an incidental portion of my main subject. Whatever be the cause, the fact is undeniable. The general principles of any study you may learn by books at home, but the detail, the colour, the tone, the air, the life which makes it live in us, you must catch all these from those in whom it lives already. You must *imitate the student in French or German*, who is not content with his grammar, but goes to Paris or Dresden; you must take example from the young artist, who aspires to visit the great Masters in Florence and in Rome. Till we have discovered some intellectual daguerreotype, which takes off the course of thought, and the form, lineaments, and features of truth, as completely and minutely, as the optical instrument reproduces the sensible object, we must come to the teachers of wisdom to learn wisdom, we must repair to the fountain, and drink there. Portions of it may go from thence to the ends of the earth by means of books, but the fullness is in one place alone. It is in such assemblages and congregations of intellect that books themselves, the masterpieces of human genius, are written, or at least originated.

The principle on which I have been insisting is so obvious, and instances in point are so ready, that I should think it tiresome to proceed with the subject, except that one or two illustrations may serve to explain my own language about it, which may not have done justice to the doctrine which it has been intended to enforce.

For instance, the polished manners and high-bred bearing which are so difficult of attainment, and so strictly personal when attained,—which are so much admired in society, from society are acquired. All that goes to constitute a gentleman—the carriage, gait, address, gestures, voice, the ease, the self-possession, the courtesy, the power of conversing, the talent of not offending, the lofty principle, the delicacy of thought, the happiness of expression, the taste and propriety, the generosity and forbearance, the candour and consideration, the openness of hand,—these qualities, some of them come by nature, some of them may be found in any rank, some of them are a direct precept of Christianity, but the full assemblage of them, bound up in the unity of an individual character, do we expect they can be learned from books? Are they not necessarily acquired, where they are to be found, in high society? The very nature of the case leads us to say so, you cannot fence without an antagonist nor challenge all comers in disputation before you have supported a thesis, and in like manner, it stands to reason, you cannot learn to converse till you have the world to converse with, you cannot unlearn your natural bashfulness, or awkwardness, or stiffness, or other besetting deformity, till you serve your time in some school of manners. Well, and is it not so in matter of fact? The metropolis, the court, the great houses of the land,

are the centres to which at stated times the country comes up, as to shrines of refinement and good taste, and then in due time the country goes back again home, enriched with a portion of the social accomplishments, which those very visits serve to call out and heighten in the gracious dispensers of them. We are unable to conceive how the "gentlemanlike" can otherwise be maintained, and maintained in this way it is.

And now a second instance and here too I am going to speak without personal experience of the subject I am introducing. I admit I have not been in Parliament, any more than I have figured in the *beau monde*, yet I cannot but think that statesmanship, as well as high breeding, is learned, not by books, but in certain centres of education. If it be not presumption to say so, Parliament puts a clever man *au courant* with politics and affairs of state in a way surprising to himself. A member of the Legislature, if tolerably observant, begins to see things with new eyes, even though his views undergo no change. Words have a meaning now, and ideas a reality, such as they had not before. He hears a vast deal in public speeches and private conversation, which is never put into print. The bearings of measures and events, the action of parties, and the persons of friends and enemies, are brought out to the man who is in the midst of them with a distinctness, which the most diligent perusal of newspapers will fail to impart to them. It is access to the fountain-heads of political wisdom and experience, it is daily intercourse, of one kind or another, with the multitude who go up to them, it is familiarity with business, it is access to the contributions of fact and opinion thrown together by many witnesses from many quarters, which does this for him. However, I need not account for a fact, to which it is sufficient to appeal, that the Houses of Parliament and the atmosphere around them are a sort of University of politics.

As regards the world of science, we find a remarkable instance of the principle which I am illustrating, in the periodical meetings for its advance, which have arisen in the course of the last twenty years, such as the British Association. Such gatherings would to many persons appear at first sight simply preposterous. Above all subjects of study, Science is conveyed, is propagated, by books, or by private teaching, experiments and investigations are conducted in silence, discoveries are made in solitude. What have philosophers to do with festive celebrities, and panegyrical solemnities with mathematical and physical truth? Yet on a closer attention to the subject, it is found that not even scientific thought can dispense with the suggestions, the instruction, the stimulus, the sympathy, the intercourse with mankind on a large scale, which such meetings secure. A fine time of year is chosen, when days are long, skies are bright, the earth smiles, and all nature rejoices, a city or town is taken by turns, of ancient name or modern opulence, where buildings are spacious and hospitality hearty. The novelty of place and circumstance, the excitement

of strange, or the refreshment of well-known faces, the majesty of rank or of genius, the amiable charities of men pleased both with themselves and with each other, the elevated spirits, the circulation of thought, the curiosity, the morning sections, the outdoor exercise, the well furnished, well earned board, the not ungraceful hilarity, the evening circle, the brilliant lecture, the discussions or collisions or guesses of great men one with another, the narratives of scientific processes, of hopes, disappointments, conflicts, and successes, the splendid eulogistic orations, these and the like constituents of the annual celebration, are considered to do something real and substantial for the advance of knowledge which can be done in no other way. Of course they can but be occasional, they answer to the annual Act, or Commencement, or Commemoration of a University, not to its ordinary condition, but they are of a University nature, and I can well believe in their utility. They issue in the promotion of a certain living and, as it were, bodily communication of knowledge from one to another, of a general interchange of ideas, and a comparison and adjustment of science with science, of an enlargement of mind, intellectual and social, of an ardent love of the particular study, which may be chosen by each individual, and a noble devotion to its interests.

Such meetings, I repeat, are but periodical, and only partially represent the idea of a University. The bustle and whirl which are their usual concomitants, are in ill keeping with the order and gravity of earnest intellectual education. We desiderate means of instruction which involve no interruption of our ordinary habits, nor need we seek it long, for the natural course of things brings it about, while we debate over it. In every great country, the metropolis itself becomes a sort of necessary University, whether we will or no. As the chief city is the seat of the court, of high society, of politics, and of law, so as a matter of course is it the seat of letters also, and at this time, for a long term of years, London and Paris are in fact and in operation Universities. The newspapers, magazines, reviews, journals, and periodicals of all kinds, the publishing trade, the libraries, museums, and academies there found, the learned and scientific societies, necessarily invest [London] with the functions of a University, and that atmosphere of intellect, which in a former age hung over Oxford or Bologna or Salamanca, has with the change of times, moved away to the centre of civil government. Thither come up youths from all parts of the country, the students of law, medicine, and the fine arts, and the *employés* and *attachés* of literature. There they live, as chance determines, and they are satisfied with their temporary home, for they find in it all that was promised to them there. They have not come in vain, as far as their own object in coming is concerned. They have not learned any particular religion, but they have learned their own particular profession well. They have, moreover, become acquainted with the habits, manners, and opinions of their place of sojourn, and done

their part in maintaining the tradition of them. We cannot then be without virtual Universities, a metropolis is such. The simple question is, whether the education sought and given should be based on principle, formed upon rule, directed to the highest ends, or left to the random succession of masters and schools, one after another, with a melancholy waste of thought and an extreme hazard of truth.

Religious teaching itself affords us an illustration of our subject to a certain point. It does not indeed seat itself merely in centres of the world, this is impossible from the nature of the case. It is intended for the many, not the few; its subject matter is truth necessary for us, not truth remote and rare, but it concurs in the principle of a University so far as this, that its great instrument, or rather organ, has ever been that which nature prescribes in all education, the personal presence of a teacher, or, in theological language, Oral Tradition. It is the living voice, the breathing form, the expressive countenance, which preaches, which catechises. Truth, a subtle, invisible, manifold spirit, is poured into the mind of the scholar by his eyes and ears, through his affections, imagination, and reason, it is poured into his mind and is sealed up there in perpetuity, by propounding and repeating it, by questioning and requesting, by correcting and explaining, by progressing and then recurring to first principles, by all those ways which are implied in the word "catechising." In the first ages, it was a work of long time, months, sometimes years, were devoted to the arduous task of disabusing the mind of the incipient Christian of its pagan errors, and of moulding it upon the Christian faith. The Scriptures indeed were at hand for the study of those who could avail themselves of them, but St. Irenæus does not hesitate to speak of whole races, who had been converted to Christianity, without being able to read them. To be unable to read or write was in those times no evidence of want of learning: the hermits of the desert were, in this sense of the word, illiterate, yet the great St. Anthony, though he knew not letters, was a match in disputation for the learned philosophers who came to try him. Didymus again, the great Alexandrian theologian, was blind. The ancient discipline, called the *Disciplina Arcani*, involved the same principle. The more sacred doctrines of Revelation were not committed to books but passed on by successive tradition. The teaching on the Blessed Trinity and the Eucharist appears to have been so handed down for some hundred years, and when at length reduced to writing, it has filled many folios, yet has not been exhausted.

But I have said more than enough in illustration, I end as I began—a University is a place of concourse, whither students come from every quarter for every kind of knowledge. You cannot have the best of every kind everywhere, you must go to some great city or emporium for it. There you have all the choicest productions of nature and art all together,

which you find each in its own separate place elsewhere. All the riches of the land, and of the earth, are carried up thither, there are the best markets, and there the best workmen. It is the centre of trade, the supreme court of fashion, the umpire of rival talents, and the standard of things rare and precious. It is the place for seeing galleries of first-rate pictures, and for hearing wonderful voices and performers of transcendent skill. It is the place for great preachers, great orators, great nobles, great statesmen. In the nature of things, greatness and unity go together; excellence implies a centre. And such, for the third or fourth time, is a University, I hope I do not weary out the reader by repeating it. It is the place to which a thousand schools make contributions, in which the intellect may safely range and speculate, sure to find its equal in some antagonist activity, and its judge in the tribunal of truth. It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward, and discoveries verified and perfected, and rashness rendered innocuous, and error exposed, by the collision of mind with mind, and knowledge with knowledge. It is the place where the professor becomes eloquent, and is a missionary and a preacher, displaying his science in its most complete and most winning form, pouring it forth with the zeal of enthusiasm, and lighting up his own love of it in the breasts of his hearers. It is the place where the catechist makes good his ground as he goes, treading in the truth day by day into the ready memory, and wedging and tightening it into the expanding reason. It is a place which wins the admiration of the young by its celebrity, kindles the affections of the middle-aged by its beauty, and rivets the fidelity of the old by its associations. It is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, a minister of the faith, an Alma Mater of the rising generation. It is this and a great deal more, and demands a somewhat better head and hand than mine to describe it well.

Such is a University in its idea and in its purpose .

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What are the principal elements of a university according to Newman's introductory statement?
- 2 What is the role of books in the process of learning? What are the limitations of that role?
- 3 How does Newman demonstrate the importance of personal "communication between man and man" in education?
- 4 In what ways are religious teaching and university teaching similar?
- 5 Summarize Newman's idea of what a university should be.
- 6 What is the organization of Newman's article. Make a short outline.
- 7 Are there any elements in Newman's style which characterize it as non-contemporary?
- 8 How do his major illustrations contribute to his purpose? Are they still applicable?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Does your experience lead you to agree with Newman's idea of the value of books in education?
- 2 In what ways does your college meet Newman's specifications? Is it a better or a worse place than the one Newman describes for educating modern young people?
- 3 Of what use have you found teachers in the educative process?
- 4 Will it ever be possible to replace teachers in the classroom with radio or television? Why or why not?
- 5 As a student in an American college, do you expect your education to deal primarily with training the mind or do you think it should have other goals? If so, what are they?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 A university should (or should not) be primarily concerned with developing the minds of its students
- 2 The ways in which college students educate each other
- 3 Why books are (or are not) the center of a university education
- 4 The differences between Newman's idea of a university and my idea of a university

## MONROE E. DEUTSCH

*born 1879 Vice President and Provost Emeritus of the University of California was President of the Western College Association 1949-50  
This article was his presidential address to the Association at its meeting of April 1, 1950*

### *What Is Academic Freedom?*

"Why academic freedom?" The answer has often been given and is clear. The function of a professor is to seek the truth and to teach it. And in seeking the truth he must be free to follow whatever path he has the slightest reason to believe will lead to it. The natural scientist tries first this experiment, then that, in the hope that he may, for example, discover the cause of cancer. There is no limitation as to the chemicals or drugs he may employ or the equipment he may use to find even a fractional answer to his question.

We shall, I am sure, agree that he who seeks the truth shall have no obstacles set before him to obstruct his path.

If, then, his purpose is to ascertain the truth, there should be nothing to hinder his publishing the results of his search, whether they be affirma-



tive or negative. In the latter case he will either discourage other scholars from pursuing the path he has mistakenly followed, or will lead his colleagues to see what the flaw was in his experimentation. In either event, publication disseminates the knowledge that has thus far been obtained concerning the specific problem. In neither the search for truth nor the publication of the results of such research should there be any limitation whatsoever.

Whatever has been discovered should naturally be included in instruction, whenever it is germane to the field covered. Obviously, since we seek to inculcate in our students a desire for truth, whenever new light upon the material under discussion has been secured by the instructor, it should appropriately be made known to his students, especially in advanced classes where the methods of research are being acquired. However, it must be admitted that sometimes professors are so absorbed in their own research that they drag its results into courses where it is inappropriate, or they devote time to it out of proportion to its importance in that particular area of instruction.

We have spoken of three phases of academic freedom—the actual research, its publication, and its place in instruction.

There is also the question of publication through lectures and addresses. Certainly before learned societies it is as fitting and necessary to reveal the success or failure of research as it is by articles or books. What of lectures before the general public? Obviously if the presentation of such results is useful and beneficial to the people as a whole, preventing them from obtaining false impressions as to cures for colds or cancer, it is highly desirable that truthful information be given. But it may be argued, 'Such scientific findings will stir up the pharmaceutical companies that make certain drugs.' I should answer that under those circumstances it is all the more important that an honest, dispassionate statement be made, I should urge that the scholar set forth the truth as he sees it.

My illustrations have been drawn from laboratory fields—and there the problem is comparatively simple.

It is when one gets into the social sciences, especially political science and economics, that the shoe pinches. But again I feel that the truth must be told. In these areas, to be sure, it is not possible to follow the procedures in chemistry and physics and submit the problems to one experiment after another. But it is in precisely these fields of study that mankind is yearning for the answer to pressing questions. When one thinks of the meticulous accuracy with which problems in the physical sciences are studied, and compares the manner in which—for example—our legislators deal with questions on whose wise solution may well hang peace or war, or on the other hand, the well-being or misery of large numbers

of our people, it is evident that not only must the social sciences be intensively studied and the research carried on with complete objectivity and freedom, but society as a whole must be taught what has been thus ascertained and so earnestly taught that a stout bridge be made between the results of research and the legislation that is adopted

Suppose, for instance, a scholar is convinced that our economic system is in this or that particular faulty and should accordingly be changed should he be stopped from teaching his conclusions or presenting them by article or word of mouth? The first responsibility of the professor is that in the area being taught and presented, he be really a scholar and have arrived at his conclusions by careful research. If his field is Latin, he has no more right to discuss or write about economic systems than any other citizen. He should no longer rely upon academic freedom or his academic title, but merely the freedom accorded to every other individual. He should be free to speak, but it is unfair to his institution if he fails to make clear that he is not a specialist in this field. In the case cited, I wonder if it would be too much to ask that his writings be signed "John Doe, Professor of Latin, Central College," and thus warn the readers that he does not speak with the background of an expert. This statement is of course a sweeping one and is capable of many exceptions. A scholar in the field of Roman history will of course find it necessary to deal with economic conditions, and similar circumstances will occur in numerous fields of study.

In writing or lecturing in a field as difficult as the social sciences, a true scholar will not rush forward precipitately, but will take time to feel assured that his work has a solid underpinning before he hastens to publicize his views. I need not remind you that there are some professors who eagerly seek the spotlight and love nothing more than spectacular pronouncements. For, after all, despite certain special characteristics, professors are human beings, and there are as many kinds of professors as there are of human beings.

Let us always state our results with the modesty which befits scholars. Often our conclusions are but hypotheses, in any event it is seldom that one can say the results are certain 'beyond the peradventure of a doubt.' It is in that spirit that we should announce our conclusions. Moreover, outside of his own field of scholarship, a professor should not ask for or expect greater freedom than any other citizen.

We now arrive at a question which is much to the fore. I shall present the problem without evasion. A state institution is dependent primarily on the Legislature for the funds for its support. A private institution seeks gifts or endowments from its alumni and friends. In both instances we may find the funds possessed or controlled by men and women with very definite views. What should be the attitude of the scholar in the

social sciences under these conditions? That he should not be muzzled is axiomatic. A university is not a university unless its motto be that of Harvard, *Veritas*. If he is convinced after long thought and careful research that he is right—or as right as his finite intelligence permits—he should speak out, but with the modesty of a true scholar. In entering upon such an enterprise, the scholar should be particularly sure of his ground, eschew any desire for the limelight, and set forth his considered judgment with due humility.

It is not easy either to define the scholar's proper attitude or to live up to it. Certainly under no circumstances should truth become a slave of Mammon. Far better is it that the institution suffer the loss of some funds and make the necessary economic adjustments (difficult as this is certain to be) rather than become what in effect is an intellectual lackey or serf.

Early in 1949 this question became acute at Harvard University, but the reply of that great institution should be the reply of all colleges and universities: "Harvard, like any great privately supported university, badly needs money; but Harvard will accept no gift on the condition, express or implied, that it shall compromise its tradition of freedom."

The professor should in his classes be as scrupulous in confining himself to that which is established as truth as in his publications. Sometimes a professor is a bit careless of the exact truth in presentation to his classes and makes statements more sweeping than can be wholly substantiated. If he is to inculcate a love of truth and an esteem for the utmost accuracy in its pursuit, he has no right to do anything but teach in the classroom with the same precision as he gives to his own research.

And teaching should never be neglected for the sake of research. Assuredly academic freedom is not to be interpreted as implying that a professor shall cut his classes or neglect his preparation for them to go to some city to give a lecture. Unless he is definitely a research professor, his obligations as teacher and his other collegiate duties should take precedence over his research or public utterances.

As has been said, outside of his field of expert knowledge, a professor has no more and no less freedom than any other citizen. But we should stress the fact that he is entitled to all the freedom that any citizen enjoys. He may engage in politics, if he will. But he should weigh carefully in what field he can do most good. Certainly he should discharge his duty as a citizen, but he must weigh the comparative advantages of serving as county chairman of his party against that of giving the additional time to the kind of work for which he has trained himself through life. Here, too, men and women differ; some, though engaged in collegiate teaching, have a special political talent, and I would not have you think I should interfere with it. But the professor should only follow such a career after

careful reflection and taking into account the sacrifices it would involve. And let us not forget that often—too often—political life calls for unswerving allegiance to a party rather than to truth, the goal which the university and the scholar set for themselves.

There is a field in which I feel professors should be especially careful in their statements—and that is philosophy. They should remember the effect their *ex cathedra* utterances may have on the thinking of their students and indeed on the religious belief of these young people. They come from a diversity of homes with all types and degrees of religious faith, they are in this respect, as in so many others, a cross section of the American people. Their faith is usually that of their parents. Let the professor of philosophy recall that while on the one hand he may be freeing the mind of a student from some untenable point of view (as the professor thinks), on the other he may be leaving the student at loose ends, having removed his religious moorings, and at the same time may well sever one of the most powerful ties binding him to his family. How shall one act in this dilemma? He should tell the truth as he sees it, but with all the reservations that should be attached to this statement, making clear that in this realm there is no possibility of speaking with the assurance of those who work with crucible or balance. He should also speak with due regard for the feelings of those he is addressing. He should set forth his views with modesty, making crystal clear that he is voicing his opinion in a field where there is a myriad of opinions. But after making such reservations he should not hesitate to set forth what he conscientiously believes to be the truth. If he is not permitted to do this, then we are in effect saying that while academic freedom exists for the chemist or physicist, it does not exist for the philosopher.

What has been said as to the philosopher is true in varying degrees of the anthropologist, the psychologist, the geologist, and the teacher of literature. In the latter case the ideas expressed by great men of letters range well nigh over the universe and should stimulate reflection on some of life's greatest problems.

And yet with all the limitations that I have set forth and others that might be added, we must still give the scholar the right to present the truth as he sees it. It may unfortunately at times have a serious effect on a student's faith, at other times it may well strengthen it—and in a more rational manner than had characterized it before it came into contact with college teaching.

Having faced two of the great problems in the field of academic freedom, let us resolutely take up a third.

I say flatly that a fanatic in any realm should not be on the staff of a college or a university. A fanatic is one whose eyes are so blinded that he cannot see the real world but only that which he constructs for him-

self or accepts without reflection or investigation. A fanatic does not seek the truth nor see it, he is interested solely in propagandizing the views which are his. A fanatic does not deserve academic freedom, for his own mind does not seek the truth—it feels sure that it has the truth. A fanatic may be in the fields of politics or economics, he may also be in the field of philosophy or religion. His is the antithesis of the open mind. But it is the fanaticism of which he is guilty that should bar him from university teaching. I can conceive of a Republican or a Democratic fanatic, though by no means as readily as a Communist fanatic. To be sure each one of us has his special prejudices, his strong leanings. Being human beings of given heredity and living in a particular environment, we naturally look at the world through glasses of somewhat different colors. This we cannot avoid, indeed, it is hard to conceive of human beings whose minds are wholly blank so that each impression is as important as every other. One brought up in wealth will have a certain point of view, one who has fought his way up from poverty will have another. Inevitably, a teacher will at times slant his instruction in one direction or another. But this is very different from the teaching of an instructor who deliberately seeks to indoctrinate his students. Academic freedom is intended only for those who are themselves intellectually free. By this I do not mean that the freedom of speech guaranteed to everyone is to be denied anyone, but I am seeking to draw a distinction between freedom of speech and academic freedom.

I personally would be reluctant to appoint a Communist to a faculty. There is a strong presumption that Communists owe their first loyalty to the U.S.S.R., that as members of the party they will use their teaching positions to propagandize for Communism, that while publicly disclaiming the intent to use force to overthrow our form of government, they would nonetheless condone it, as they have done in Czechoslovakia.

While it might be argued that there is no certainty that a Communist would abuse his position, on the other hand we are far from certain that he will not do so. Let us suppose a person were proposed for appointment and it were known that during his life he had twice had a serious mental breakdown. Even though he were regarded as cured, would one not hesitate to appoint him? I do not mean necessarily to imply that every Communist is suffering from a mental aberration. Do you remember the story told of President Conant of Harvard? He was asked what he would do if a member of the faculty were to come to him and say "I am a Communist." Conant replied, "I would tell him to go to a psychiatrist."

Seriously speaking, I wish to point out that no one has a right to be appointed to a professorial position, but on the contrary a college has a right to decline to make an appointment, where there is a question as to

the physical or mental fitness of the person under consideration or as to his intellectual integrity

And I feel that it is among the obligations of the faculty (especially of the department concerned) to see to it that the administration of the college has all possible information concerning the applicant, including his membership in the Communist party if he is so affiliated

Let us now turn to the case of those who are already on the staff of an institution but are suspected of being Communists. I am not of course referring to the loose charges made against liberals but the question of actual membership in the party. I think it is the duty of a faculty member who is led to believe that X is a party member to report the case without fail to the president and the faculty committee on privilege and tenure. That committee should at once set an investigation afoot, not as to X's membership in the party, but whether his teaching has been tainted by that fact. While to be sure there is a presumption that he has abused his position as a teacher, no one should be deprived of a post on the basis of a presumption. That is wholly contrary to the American theory of justice. If it be argued that membership in the Communist party is itself a crime, then we as a people should forthwith proceed to bring charges in our courts against every member of the party.

If not, then certainly we should not dismiss a member of the faculty on the basis of a presumption. This is turning back by several centuries our theory of justice, and it is easy to see how dangerous a road that would be and to what dreadful injustices it would lead.

However, I feel certain that every Communist, as a result of his membership in the party and his obligations to it, will abuse his position in the faculty either within the classroom or outside of it and as a result properly subject himself to dismissal. Moreover, a strict control of appointments added to a careful scrutiny of those in the faculty charged with being members of the party should completely cleanse the institution of every individual infected with the disease.

But it is entirely proper to dispense with the necessity of proving that a Communist has abused his position as a member of the faculty and merely establish beyond the peradventure of a doubt membership in the party, provided that the contract of appointment makes clear that such membership will automatically render the contract null and void and result in the dismissal of the individual.

But tragic it would be if difference of opinion in the methods of dealing with Communists should to their glee result in the destruction of a college or university. Those entrusted with responsibility for an institution—trustees, president, faculty—all eager for its well being, should be able to reach a proper accord and one that will not harm those who are innocent and loyal.

1 If faculties have freedom, they must assume the responsibilities it imposes. They have no right merely to participate in appointments to the staff, and then to wash their hands of any obligation to "clean house" where a need is shown. And the investigating committee should not regard itself as a board of defense for accused professors, but as a jury charged with the greatest of responsibilities. They should be no less willing to recommend the dismissal of the individual if he has demonstrated his inability to seek the truth and his desire merely to fill the minds of his students with propaganda, than to urge his retention if, despite his liberal point of view, he does not let fixed opinions blind him to the facts in the situation. And I hope the committees would go even further than this, that they would not hesitate to reprove a professor who claims the opinions which he expresses are indisputable facts or takes pleasure in hurting the feelings of those of this or that religious faith or political view.

In short, freedom must be used as it is intended that it be used—not as a cloak for propaganda, nor for making the uncertain appear certain, nor for sadistically hurting the sensibilities of young students, but to permit a search for truth, carried on with all humility, with emphasis on the significant and without the slightest desire for self aggrandizement.

On the other hand the faculty should regard themselves as guardians of academic freedom and see to it, for example, that the financial considerations of which I spoke previously shall not lead to efforts to curtail that freedom. The faculty should not yield but should point out that if teaching is expected to follow the list of gifts, it would be better frankly to close the institution than to distort truth or muzzle those chosen because they have made truth their guide.

The faculty should in return realize how great a boon is theirs and use it with wisdom and fairness. Indeed because adherence to it may well result in financial loss to the institution, the faculty should all the more make their teaching superlatively good, perform all their academic duties fully, carry on their research with fidelity, announce the results with due caution, and seek to inculcate in their students a loyalty both to truth and to the form of government which permits—nay, encourages—freedom of investigation and freedom of utterance concerning its results.

In carrying on research, a professor has an obligation to know what his predecessors in this field of study have announced as their views or conclusions. He should moreover be regarded by his colleagues as learned in his department of scholarship, he must remember that academic freedom is granted as the fruit of scholarship. Were it not that, then every Tom, Dick, and Harry would regard himself as entitled to be heard with the respect due our foremost scholars.

It should also be realized that everything printed even in a learned

journal is not necessarily another stone in the temple of Truth. Some deal with matters so small that they may fairly be termed inconsequential. This may occur when a young teacher is pushed precipitately into publication. Let him have a chance to think and reflect, and to broaden his knowledge—in short, to season. What a university should be interested in when it considers the young man's advancement in the faculty is his scholarship, how broad is it? Is he advancing in learning? Or is he resting content on the hood of the doctorate? He should be expected to grow intellectually. And even conversation should elicit what he has read, with how much enthusiasm he deals with his subject. I am of course here not alluding to other qualifications for advancement, notably pre-eminent teaching skill.

In return for the precious gift of freedom—a gift which men in many another profession would prize—what obligations has the professor?

I have already stated those pertaining to his research. The freedom he must remember is that accorded him as a professor. In return he should fulfill his duties as teacher and member of the faculty with exemplary zeal. He should be as accurate in teaching as in scholarly research. He should be keenly interested in teaching and not resent the interruption in his private studies. He should seek to fire his students with enthusiasm and in turn be stimulated by them. He should scrupulously meet all his university or college obligations, be they in classroom or in faculty or committee. He should in all sincerity feel himself one of the Lord's anointed in being granted the privileges that are his. He should remember that in his classroom he has the opportunity to make his impress upon a group of the next generation. He should appreciate that academic freedom is an integral part of an academic career, and that he who neglects his academic duties does not deserve academic freedom, he is, like a gambler, seeking the return without putting forth the effort.

Academic freedom is one of the great privileges of an academic life, it should be used wisely and not recklessly, but it should not be curtailed in the slightest, standing as it does for the untrammelled search for truth.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. Deutsch's article is an example of public address. What elements of his style characterize it as oral communication?
2. How does Deutsch define academic freedom? How does he limit it?
3. Where do you think the address might be shortened to advantage?
4. Where would you provide some specific examples?
5. What does Deutsch suggest is the reason for the existence of "academic freedom"?
6. Explain what academic freedom implies for research, for publication and for instruction.



- 7 What is the bearing of academic freedom on matters that may involve legislation?
- 8 What are the responsibilities of the professor, as a possessor of academic freedom?
- 9 To whom does Deutsch believe the right to teach and the accompanying academic freedom should be denied and for what reasons?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What do you think would be some of the results of the abolishment of academic freedom?
- 2 Are there any infringements or threats to academic freedom at present?
- 3 In your opinion what are the best ways of insuring that academic freedom continue to exist and of insuring that those who have it live up to the responsibilities it implies?
- 4 What safeguards exist against the abuse of academic freedom by professors who might want to indoctrinate students improperly?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 No freedom exists without a corresponding responsibility
- 2 The difference between freedom of speech and academic freedom
- 3 How the public can be informed on the meaning of academic freedom
- 4 Safeguards for the preservation of academic freedom
- 5 Should a Communist be allowed to teach?

## BERNARD IDDINGS BELL

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## *Know How vs Know Why*

Everything about American education is getting bigger all the time the number of students enrolled, the size of its installations the amount of dollars it spends—and the vast volume of pedagogical gobble-dygook which extols its methods without bothering to define its ends As it gets bigger and bigger, more and more people are insistently asking is it any good?

The complaining voice is that not of a few carping malcontents but of a multitude of doubters deeply skeptical of what is being produced in

the way of a people who should be personally content, socially responsible and politically effective. Thoughtful parents—often aghast at what is being done and not being done—organize, agitate, protest and petition. Leaders of business and industry commonly deplore the ignorance, laxness and gaucherie of the products that tumble by the thousands each year from the end of our educational assembly line. Teachers themselves voice embittered disillusion—discovering dismally that real boys and girls bear little resemblance to the theoretical boys and girls whom they were taught to expect and were expected to teach.

All the disillusioned have come to share a simple common fear: we are producing—at great expense and with the most incongruous self-congratulation—a nation of Henry Aldriches. The dismayed and the skeptical further believe that those in charge of what is called (so loosely) “education” in America have little perception themselves of what schooling is supposed to be or to do. They feel that the failures of the schools promise eventually to make our culture crude and unstable, our nation politically inept and insecure. Ours should be a “democratic education” indeed—as our rhetorical pedagogues repeatedly assert. But the critics are no longer exorcised by the glib use of that magic phrase “Democratic education”—splendid!—but the beauty of the adjective does not conceal the vacuity of the noun. Let whatever we have be “democratic”—but let us be sure it is also *education*.

In what concrete respects is the current product not education? The first is its reluctance to insist on those formative disciplines which alone can promise proficiency in doing and thinking. Our schools are seriously crippled by the assumption that the acquiring of the skills and the understanding necessary for effective thinking and honorable living is really quite easy. The truth is that the task of the teacher is not primarily to let the pupils do what they want to do, when and how they want to do it. The teacher's art is to devise ways of imparting to the learners a respect for the basic wisdom of their forebears—wisdom distilled from man's age-long experience in dealing with things less than man and with man himself. Obviously the teacher should strive to persuade the pupils to like what they learn, this is not at all, however, like letting them decide what they learn.

What our children must learn involves, primarily and indispensably, what Pestalozzi called ‘the disciplines of word, number and form.’ Today we cannot claim our education to be successful in instructing in any one of the three.

Discipline of word demands teaching our children how to read, write and speak the English language, if not with facility and grace at least with clarity. It is an imperative discipline for a people striving to live together democratically, in mutual understanding and cooperation. Yet most

Americans today can only with sweat and tears read anything more difficult than a tabloid newspaper or a comic strip. A certain metropolitan daily which insists that it is the world's greatest newspaper instructs its staff that every article must be written on the assumption that its allegedly adult readers have a reading ability of children not more than 12 years old. Few Americans under 40 can write a simple letter and make their meaning clear. They rarely converse except in clichés. In short, in this day when understanding of the whole world is so needed, our educational system has failed not only to teach our children foreign languages but also to teach them even how to chat in adequate English with their next-door neighbors.

No more successful are our schools in respect to the discipline of number. Mathematics does more than help people make the simple calculations incident to life and labor in any age, it also helps them to learn, at least a little, how to reason logically. Our present elementary and secondary education tolerates slovenly mathematics—and leaves higher education to fret over it. At a leading state university, students taking elementary college botany are asked, year after year, to look at plant tissue through a microscope whose field has a diameter of 1.5 millimeters. A piece of the tissue is mounted, and the students are asked to count the number of cells in that diameter. The number of cells proves to be three and a half. How long, then, is each cell? Year after year only four out of 10 students can divide 1.5 millimeters by three and a half. The rest murmur unhappily something about never being good in mathematics.

The third discipline—that of form—involves the art of using the five senses for true observation of objects animate and inanimate. Necessary for scientific experimentation, it is equally needed for the real enjoyment of one's world, even for one's own personal safety. Yet university teachers of science and the employers of young labor alike testify that the 'educated' product of American schools is as untrained in this discipline as in those of word and number.

All these failings stem from one notion that afflicts contemporary education: the illusion that ability to think rationally and live purposefully is a natural by-product of almost any sort of so-called 'free activity.' The truth is the opposite: that ability can only be the result of methodical and coherent training in the use of mental tools. That training teaches four essential things: to have at least an elementary understanding of other persons, to appreciate and use accurate language, to sense objects truly and at least to some extent to think abstractly. Such knowledge can come only through the disciplines of word, number and form. And these are the indispensable—and the grossly neglected—business of our schools.

In the light of this first great failing of American schools, it is not surprising to find that their second is a basic irresponsibility which they

develop in the students. For society there is danger of the gravest instability when its youth are unchallenged in the impression that one may eat one's cake and have it too, that there can be reward without quest, wages without work, a master's prestige without a master's skill, marriage without fidelity, national security without individual sacrifice.

Unfortunately these notions—as lightheaded as they are lighthearted—are only too characteristic of the American temperament. A school may properly sympathize with those who lack ability, but it cannot rightly blur the difference between competence and incompetence. If children in the schoolroom and on the playing field see that the sloppy worker gets the same treatment as his hard working brother, they cannot also be expected to see much use in going in for creative toil. They apply their warped lesson to the adult world.

What then are we to say when we find public school systems which promote all children at the end of each academic year regardless of whether their work has been good, bad or indifferent? And there are not many high schools which will refuse a diploma to the most stupid or most lazy pupil, provided he has kept out of jail. Twenty years ago a public high school teacher was expected to fail—and did fail—those who had not mastered 60% of the subject matter of a course. So stern a teacher is no longer tolerated. He is subjected first to persuasion, then if necessary to pressure, to abandon such outdated ways and to pass every one of his students. If he sticks by his convictions he may be asked to fill out for each student he fails an elaborate form explaining the inner why of the failure and demanding of him many hours of work, a knowledge of home environment impossible without sociological research and an insight into hidden attitudes which none but a skilled psychiatrist could uncover. Finally the teacher gives in and thereafter obediently passes all his pupils whether or not they have learned anything. "Everybody has won," said the Dodo after the caucus race, "and all must have prizes."

The common excuse for such goings on is that to withhold reward and promotion creates in the incompetent a dangerous sense of inferiority. This argument is as mad as the practice it defends. What could be better calculated to promote an unhealthy psychosis than to prepare a child for a world of struggle and competition by wrapping his mind in the woolly illusion that achievement and negligence should receive the same reward? Is it any wonder that only the exceptional graduates of a school system that so slurs truth do not find themselves wholly disarmed against reality?

Our school system has a third serious affliction. It seems to presuppose that, for education to be democratic, every man's child must be treated as the equal of every other man's child, both in kind of brains and in educability. The effect of this is to herd an increasing number of unfit persons into colleges of liberal arts whose proper business is to help students

of exceptional intelligence to understand human affairs and to develop sound judgment therein. The notion has become common that such a college can enroll boys and girls regardless of their lack of training in basic intellectual disciplines and after a while, just because the faculty has labored with them and on them for four years, send them back to us humanely competent.

The country needs far more than the contribution of those who have been able to accumulate knowledge of a few facts, master certain mechanical processes, make in themselves and in the body politic such minor and secondary adjustments as may be dictated by immediate expediency. We need leadership in the art of living and can get it only from those few who are competent to estimate values wisely, to discriminate between truth and specious propaganda, to know, to enlighten and to lead. As never before, our nation needs such men. We are at a moment of devastating awakening in our history, slowly shaking off old slumbrous illusions that existence itself can be bought at less than a heavy price. Rudely roused from reveries about inevitable progress—in fact, inevitable invincibility—we are beginning at least to blink at facts as they are instead of as we thought them. To help us level our gaze and steady our nerves, we need effective guidance from those who have learned to understand the true nature of the one constant in the turmoil—man himself.

Why, in mid century America, is our need for such leadership so unfulfilled? Because we find it hard to admit that such wisdom can be acquired only by persons equipped by nature with a not too common type of brains. We shy from this fact as "undemocratic." And we continue to offer to the many what is useful only to the few.

The quickest consequence of all this is to convert our colleges into education factories, trying to do fast package jobs on a mass-production scale. When we force into the colleges undergraduates unequipped for liberal studies and untrained in the basic disciplines, the colleges can only try to impart such disciplines at this too-late date. Academic standards must slacken to allow this. Academic expectations are lowered to avoid ofense or discrimination against the ungifted. The only significant result is to avoid education in the fullest sense. Speed and mass, standardization and stereotyping, all conspire to frustrate one simple purpose of schooling which—in G. K. Chesterton's fine, jaunty phrase—is to encourage "every potty little person to be happily and effectively his potty little self."

When one argues like this the commonest rejoinder is that a democratic educational system ought not merely to prepare candidates for membership in an intellectual elite. This is true but irrelevant. The point is that our colleges are neither discovering nor preparing those few—be they from palaces or slums, from any social or ethnic group—who po-

mentally are fit to serve their own people as leaders. This is no disparagement of those whose role in society may be to hew wood, draw water and tend machines. There are no more honorable and indispensable pursuits than theirs. But for these pursuits—in the best technological schools—they should be trained. The truth today is that we are plentifully supplied with people who can make things and incredibly short of people who understand things. Technicians—to put it bluntly—are two bits a dozen in America. Thinkers—leaders of liberal wisdom—seem to have vanished with the buffalo. If the breed is not wholly to perish, our educators had better get busy.

### A NATION OF RELIGIOUS ILLITERATES

As (and if) they get to work along these lines, our educators will fast face the final and most deep rooted ailment of our school system—its seeming bafflement by religion. Our public schools and colleges are rarely antireligious. They simply ignore religion. They look on it as a minor amusement to be practiced by those who find it fun, to be neglected if one desires. Obviously this outlook is quickly communicated to the young. If a child is taught in school about a vast number of things—for 25 hours a week, eight or nine months a year, for 10 to 16 years or more—and if for all this time matters of religion are never seriously treated, the child can only come to view religion as, at best, an innocuous pastime preferred by a few to golf or canasta.

Most of the American people are religiously illiterate. The only exceptions are a small minority who have gone to Protestant or Catholic parochial schools, and another few who have had parents exceptionally able to counteract the influence of the public schools. About all that most Americans possess nowadays in the way of religion is a number of prejudices, chiefly against faiths other than those with which they have traditional affiliations, a few quaint moral taboos, not very strong, infantile notions about deity, devotional techniques which rarely go beyond "Now I lay me down to sleep" and "God bless papa and mama." Perhaps half of them—not more—go once in a while to some church which they joined with only a foggy idea of its tenets or requirements. This does not add up to religion as the race has understood religion.

Religion is man's search, in a world where every human career ends in frustration of ambition and speedy death, for strength and courage to be gained from the heart of a spiritual reality greater than matter, greater than an individual man, greater than the more or less human race. This search lies beneath creeds and cults, rituals and sacraments, techniques of prayer and meditation. In respect to these a certain deftness has come into being as the result of ages-old experiment, a deftness quite beyond

the usual American of the moment, who is apt to be crudely inexperienced in his gropings toward a universal source of strength His idea of prayer is commonly magical He thinks that meditation means having an argument with himself His worship is superficial, sentimental, chockfull of pride Silence and aloneness are monsters from which he craves escape He goes on from youth into maturity, old age, death, unarmed against his own weakness, vulnerable

A good education is not so much one which prepares a man to succeed in the world as one which enables him to sustain failure Even Communist Russia, proclaiming its atheism, appreciates this need for spiritual reassurance, holding forth the fraudulent promise of an earthly paradise of proletarians This demands sheer faith there is no historical or scientific evidence for such a dream world It is a religion, crude but potently apocalyptic and relentlessly propagated to their young Only we Americans decline to recognize the necessity of a living faith

Our schools were founded by those who considered religion of primary importance Those who wrote into the Constitution that in our land there must never be an established church had no idea that anyone would construe this to ban religious instruction in schools, or to deny tax-support of schools conducted under religious auspices There is no evidence whatever of intention on their part to make such prohibitions

Much of the blame for our unfortunate change of mind must be placed on a shortsighted American Protestantism By the 1830s and 1840s it began to be realized that there is not one Protestant religion but two a traditional Protestantism based on recognition of man's need of redemption and a modernist Protestantism based on faith in man's self perfectibility Which of these quite different religions was to be taught in the public schools? Neither side was willing to yield The conclusion better no teaching than heretical teaching As for arranging that the two faiths should be taught in the one school, each to those pupils whose parents signified which was their choice—that seems to have occurred to almost no one

Equally potent, in secularism's insidious growth, was a growing apprehensiveness toward Roman Catholics In 1820 there had been only 195,000 Catholics in the US Chiefly as a result of immigrations, by 1850 there were 1,600,000, by 1880 there were 6,259,000 The newcomers had a faith and a practice which were neither orthodox Protestant nor modernist Protestant They demanded that the schools should teach to Catholic children religion as Catholics understand it If this could not be done, they demanded a share of school tax money wherewith to run their own schools Why, they asked, should all the cash go to schools that taught Protestantism of one sort or another? Both these demands were

denied. It was expected that this would squelch the Catholics, who were mostly poor people and would be unable or unwilling to pay *twice* for their schools—once in taxes for public schools and again for all expenses of their own. It has worked the other way. The Catholic (and Protestant) parochial schools have not been starved out, as was anticipated. They have grown in numbers and effectiveness, holding their young to loyalty. The damage has been to the health of Protestantism. For out of the public schools, dismissing religion at Protestant insistence, come successive generations of young people born of Christian families, of the Christian tradition—and ignorant of the faith of Christianity.

These four, then, are the grievous criticisms being leveled today against American education. It neglects the basic disciplines. It tends to turn out graduates who expect the cheap success of reward without labor. It denies our society the training of leadership by madly mixing technology and liberal learning and trying to feed the indigestible stew to thousands who choke on it. By treating religion as a dispensable diversion, it deprives the young of allegiance to any spiritual compulsion greater than love of country.

This is not enough. One's country is not an adequate end for which to live and die, not indeed an end at all but only a means toward an end. What end? Our schools do not help their students to answer this fundamental question. They do not even ask it. If the question be asked and wrongly answered, much harm may be done, as in Hitler's Germany or Stalin's Russia. But if it be not asked at all, if in consequence we are patriotic only because it is fashionable or it pays to be so, we shall become so morally debilitated that even our vast technological might will not long save us from those nations which put their trust in something greater than themselves. "Know how" is not enough. It is vain and empty without "know why."

All this spells need for reform in our school theory and practice—quite radical reform. For today our schools suffer from complacent orthodoxy, from deadening devotion to a theory of man and a theory of knowledge that can only lead to disaster tomorrow.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What is the organization of this essay? Does the conclusion follow from the premises?
2. How would you characterize Bell's style? For what level of education does he seem to be writing?
3. What does Bell mean by the disciplines of word, number and form? How many hours of your training have been occupied with these disciplines?
4. What are the chief specific ways in which Bell believes that education is failing? For what reasons?



- 5 Explain his criticism of present education with respect to rewards for achievement.
- 6 What are his reasons for saying that present education does not train enough people who "understand things"?
- 7 What is his attitude on the question of religious training?
- 8 What distinction does he intend by opposing "know why" to "know how"?

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is it Bell's purpose to present a balanced view of good and bad aspects of present education, or a deliberately one sided view? Why?
- 2 What is there to be said in favor of "prizes for everybody" in school?
- 3 Do you think religious instruction in public schools is a practical possibility? For what reasons?
- 4 What distinctions should be made between education on the one hand and technological training on the other? Give some specific examples

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Why school children are (or are not) happier today than they used to be
- 2 Colleges should educate first and train for specific occupations second
- 3 Everyone should (or should not) be graduated from high school
- 4 What I want from college

## PAUL H. DOUGLAS

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## Culture and Character

### I

In one of his conversations with Eckermann, Goethe remarked that "Culture is developed in solitude, character in the stream of events." In this fusion of apparent opposites is to be found, I believe, the key to harmonious and useful living.

Goethe properly insisted that we join culture and character. They have been too often separated. Some of us can remember the *fin de siècle*

writers and artists who, taking their inspiration from Walter Pater, and perhaps also from the Pre-Raphaelites, advanced the theory that art should not concern itself with life but should instead be developed by and for its own sake. This spirit expressed itself in England in the writings of Oscar Wilde, the poems of Ernest Dowson, and the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley. At the same time in France, Toulouse-Lautrec was painting the demimondaines of Paris while the poetry of Paul Verlaine and the novels of Turgenev were the rage.

These were the men who set the fashion which was copied by those of lesser abilities. In this country, young men of means, uncertain of themselves and distrustful of the vigor and crudities of a new continent, with drew from life and made the isolated pursuit of a derivative culture their goal. To them, the expatriate painters, Sargent and Whistler, the de-vitalized Henry James, and the rococo architect Stanford White, were the models which all cultivated Americans should imitate.

Now there was something pretentious and false about even the culture of these gentry. It was not deeply rooted in either learning or emotion since these were qualities which were respectively too austere and too compelling for timid men. They concerned themselves therefore with more trivial subjects and laid their emphasis upon self-conscious techniques rather than upon subject-matter or theme. The classic expose of this pretentious much ado about nothing was expressed early by the inimitable W. S. Gilbert in *Patience* which should have laughed Bunthornism out of existence and have deterred the men and women of that generation from "uttering platitudes in stained glass attitudes." But unfortunately it failed and tens of thousands of the leisured class in Western Europe and America succumbed to the enervating influence of the pursuit of culture for its own sake.

After the first World War, another attempt to achieve culture divorced from character was made by the self styled intellectuals of the Western World. Bloomsbury in London, the left bank of Paris, Greenwich Village in New York and their host of lesser counterparts were filled with young men and women who, in the name of art, were attempting to escape from morality. In painting, the School of Paris and the abstractionists with their doctrine that art must be stripped of meaning, dominated the scene. Proust, D. H. Lawrence, and Aldous Huxley were the prevailing literary gods, while Noel Coward came to be the leading dramatist. Another exodus from America took place of those who allegedly found American life to be too "coarse" and who settled down on the left bank to lead the so-called larger life. I well remember an evening in the late twenties which I spent in Paris with the leader of this group of expatriates who had earlier edited a scathing book to prove it was impossible to lead a cultivated life in these United States. This exponent of the arts was prac-

ticing his profession by reporting the horse races at Longchamps for the Paris edition of the *New York Herald* and his conversation showed less wit than is common in one of our West Side saloons in Chicago. Nor was it merely the private lives of this generation which were lost. When the hour of trial came and the Nazis broke into France, these men were not defenders of freedom. Instead most of the members of the School of Paris and the international set became collaborationists, and so the evils of another generation festered in dark alleys and in the stagnant pools of life.

Now after a second World War, there are signs that members of a still third generation are about to separate themselves from the stream of life and seek satisfaction in a pursuit of the senses disguised as culture.

It may perhaps be legitimately objected that thus far, I have painted far too lurid a picture. Those who pursue culture exclusively do not in the main use it as a mere cloak for vicious living. There are instead a host of scholars and aesthetes who seek culture in a discriminating manner which separates them sharply from the tosspots of Montparnasse. Such are men of the stamp of Henry Adams, Henry James, Paul Elmer More, and Henry Dwight Sedgwick. Every university has men and women of this type as do museums and libraries while there are numerous private scholars who fall within this category. Most of these people are charming and frequently they are decorative.

But however attractive such persons may be, we all, I think, recognize a lack in them. What they lack is strength. Because they have withdrawn from the stream of life, they have not in general developed virility of character. In consequence they are often precious and frequently querulous. Henry Adams is the perfect example of this type. He could never soil his hands with the dust of conflict and so he not only kept out of the Civil War but also out of all the social movements of the next half-century. Learned in British and American history and in medieval art and thought, a dabbler in physics, he was after all merely a spectator of life. For nearly forty years, he looked across at the White House from his elegantly furnished home on Lafayette Square and lamented the times, which did not recognize his pre-eminence by making him without toil or effort, President of the United States or at the least Secretary of State or Ambassador to Great Britain. That this was not done was strong proof in his mind of the disintegration both of matter and society. With all of Adams' brilliance there was a strong undercurrent of futility in his life of which he was uneasily aware but which he obstinately refused to cure.

In a similar vein the chief impression which one gains from the lives of Henry James and Logan Pearsall Smith is that of subtle but rootless artists who fleeing from the crudities of a vigorous country, sought refuge in the decaying folds of the class stratified society of England and in the process decayed along with their environment.

In short, the pursuit of culture to the exclusion of character gives us men who are at best fragile and at worst vicious. When the storms of adversity beat upon them, as happens upon occasion to most lives, they tend to go down in futility or failure. Similarly, since there is struggle between societies, those in which men have lost the will to sacrifice for the common goal fall before more virile and more cohesive groups. In the testing fires of time, therefore, the quest for culture divorced from character does not have survival value.

## 2

But now let us examine the other side of the shield and consider those who have concentrated upon character to the neglect of culture. We all know such people and in general they are somewhat unlovely and unattractive. The Puritans for example made the development of character their self-conscious goal and believed that works of beauty were sinful expressions of the evil spirit. Oliver Cromwell and the supporters of the Commonwealth broke up the art collections of Charles I to the lasting loss of England and the gain of the continent. In this country, the Puritan influence was hostile to art and culture and has been the strongest single influence in repressing it. For generations, it helped to freeze the genial currents of the soul and created a society as aesthetically barren as its rocky hillsides and as emotionally cold as its winters. There are few more repellent characters in all of American history than Cotton and Increase Mather and Jonathan Edwards, who were the high priests of New England theology. While Puritanism helped to permeate the country with a sense of social responsibility, for which we owe it a great debt, it did not produce lovable or well-rounded men and women.

In a similar fashion, the Evangelical movement which spread through Protestantism in the 19th Century helped to purify the national character, but it was certainly adverse to the arts. Largely insensitive to beauty, it gave us the mawkish hymns of Sankey and the fiery exhortations of Moody as the corporate expression of religion. To those who believed in the privacy of sacred emotions it was somewhat shocking to be accosted on the street by Moody and his followers and asked if one was "saved." To what emotional excesses and aesthetic ugliness such tendencies could lead was well exemplified in the conduct of frontier camp meetings and the revivalist activities of Billy Sunday and Aimee MacPherson.

In modern times with its shifting of emphasis from individual salvation to social well being, we all know the well meaning reformers who are so busy trying to reform society that they neglect to enrich their own lives with beauty or to deepen them through study and contemplation. There is nothing more exhausting than to move from one meeting to another with

no time for personal development, and I sometimes believe that one reason why those of us who have fallen into this treadmill have so little effect upon the world about is that we communicate this feeling of exhaustion to those we meet and give them an uneasy sense of being devitalized

### 3

The truth of the matter is that for a well-rounded and effective life and for a strong yet attractive society we need a combination of character and culture. For these are not competing, but rather complementary qualities. The great and winsome characters of history have always been men who have combined these attributes. To the student of art Michelangelo is loved as the superb sculptor of the Moses, the bound Slaves, the Pietas, the figures of Night and Day, Morning and Evening, as the matchless painter who, confronted with terrific technical difficulties, poured out his fiery genius in the breath-taking scenes and figures on the barrel-shaped vault of the Sistine Chapel and who as an architect gave us the perfectly swelling dome of St. Peter's. But Michelangelo was also a devout Christian who, despite his ties with the Medici, like Botticelli, followed the reformer Savonarola in his efforts to purify the Church and State. He was also the passionate Florentine patriot who, when others fled, volunteered to help defend Florence against both Pope and Emperor and was in charge of the fortifications of his beloved city in the terrible siege of 1529-30. Like a sturdy soldier, he spent his day upon the walls of Florence fighting off the imperial armies and then would steal into the basement of San Miniato and work away at his figure of Night.

Of all our Americans, Jefferson was perhaps the most many-sided. Author of the Declaration of Independence and the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, reforming governor of Virginia, minister to France, Secretary of State, Vice-President, founder of the Democratic Party, leader of the popular forces in the country and one of our truly great presidents, Jefferson's talents were of a high order in many diverse fields. One of the great masters of literary style, he was also a practical inventor, a student and practitioner of scientific agriculture, an acute observer of natural science, a skilled parliamentarian, an amateur musician and a far-seeing educational reformer. By his design and construction of Monticello and the old campus of the University of Virginia, he so blended the arts of architecture and landscape gardening as to give to the world the perfect examples of elegant simplicity. Culture was an integral part of Jefferson as was his passionate belief in the ultimate sovereignty of the people and his political skill and organizing ability.

It is still the popular fashion to regard Lincoln as a crude and boorish countryman who only grew into political greatness and moral nobility

during the heat and passion of the Civil War. Close students of his life have long known that the style which flowered so perfectly in the Gettysburg Address, the letter to Mrs. Bixby, and the Second Inaugural was not a matter of sudden growth. From Basler's excellent collection of Lincoln's speeches and writings we can see the early roots of his style. The Peoria speech of 1854 against the Kansas-Nebraska Act was powerful in logic and apt in expression. The "House Divided" speech at Springfield in 1858, the Freeport Speech of later in the same campaign, and the Cooper Union Speech of early 1860 are all remarkable performances. The man who could write such addresses as those and the haunting farewell to Springfield, was already a master of English style before he stepped over the threshold of the White House. And this mastery was largely due to study and reflection upon the two most penetrating analyses of life, namely the Bible and the plays of Shakespeare.

In our own time and in my own city, another saint of mankind lived amongst us in the person of Jane Addams. Even her once bitterest critics now recognize her for what she was, namely, the embodiment of active and intelligent goodwill. In the fifty years she lived in our West side, she was the greatest force for good that my city and state has ever experienced. But she was also one of our greatest writers and most penetrating thinkers. Thoroughly grounded in the literature of all countries, she absorbed these into her personal life. A student of art and architecture, she insisted that the poor had the right to beauty as well as to bread. An art museum, musical clubs, and drama groups were integral parts of Hull House. Realizing the importance of handicraft, she set up an historical museum at Hull House for the textile and other industries which long preceded the great museums in Munich and in Jackson Park. Believing as she said that those persons were most cultivated who could put "themselves in the place of the greatest number of persons," she traveled frequently through all sections of the world. A cultivated citizen of the entire globe, she was yet deeply rooted in Halsted Street and the 20th Ward. Under her, Hull House became the spiritual center, not only of a city and a region but in one sense of the country itself.

I shall offer but one more illustration, namely, Albert Schweitzer. One of the great organists of all time, the authority upon the life and music of Johann Sebastian Bach, a penetrating student of philosophy and profound theologian, Schweitzer became acutely conscious of the wrongs which the white race had inflicted upon the blacks. His inner voice would not let him rest and he felt an even stronger obligation to make a personal atonement for these sins of his race. So he studied medicine and went to the Congo to give his life as a doctor and surgeon to the ignorant blacks of that dark continent. There he has labored for over thirty years. In the

heart of the African forest, he has become a great doctor and a great surgeon with his skill dedicated to humanity. And yet he is an even finer organist than ever before and no one can listen to his playing of Bach without feeling that his unselfish life has somehow helped him better to understand and transmit those noble harmonies.

These are men and women who to a supreme degree have been able to combine culture and character. And this is worthy of note. Their culture has been at once deeper and purer because it has grown in a nobility of soul. Can there be any comparisons for example between the integrated and harmonious Jefferson with his broad sympathies and the querulous Henry Adams, devoid of human affection? Or between the mighty Michelangelo and the rootless members of the School of Paris? Or between Tolstoi, seeking to live a life of self-sacrifice and the self-indulgent Pre-Raphaelites and contributors to the Yellow Book? Or between our politician-saint Lincoln and the artful poseur Disraeli? We need not go as far as Tolstoi in maintaining that there can be no art which is not based on morality, but surely we can say that self-sacrifice, sympathy, love, pity, courage, and active goodwill ennoble art and give it a meaning beyond that given by mere excellence of technical form. A noble message is, as Van Wyck Brooks has pointed out, essential for a noble art.

Is it not also true that those who refresh their spirits from the fountains of culture can at once give more to their fellowmen and cause them to desire excellence more ardently than can those whose characteristics are graceless virtue? There have been other settlement workers as selfless as Jane Addams but none who had so much to give or whose appeal was so compelling. There have been others besides Tolstoi and St. Francis who have obeyed our Saviour's injunction to give up our worldly goods and serve the humble and the disinherited, but none whose impression on men has been so great. Just as character ennobles culture, so does true culture make character attractive and in the best sense of the term winsome.

Nor should we be discouraged because we personally do not have the genius of character or of artistic ability to make of our lives the superb successes of those whom I have mentioned. The point is that we can make greater successes of our lives than we are doing and that by cultivating both character and culture we can best realize our possibilities.

#### 4

Here again Goethe has shown us the way by reminding us that culture is best developed in solitude but character in the stream of events. We need quiet in which to study, to practice, to think and to create. Neither the message nor the technique of the great masters is to be understood amidst the blare of radios and loud speakers. To understand and to ap-

preciate, we need to withdraw and then humbly to examine. The distractions of the world must be excluded before we can grasp the inner meanings of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, the beauty of the *Ode to a Grecian Urn* and *To a Skylark*, the diapason of *War and Peace* and the depth of the *Brothers Karamazov*. One must strain one's attention to the utmost to get the full meaning of Michelangelo's paintings of Creation, of Adam and Eve, and of the Prophets and Sibyls which adorn the ceiling of the Sistine or to appreciate the sensuous beauty of Giorgione's *Venus*, his *Fête Champêtre*, or his *Soldier and Gypsy*. If one goes to a concert to hear Beethoven's Fifth and Ninth Symphonies and Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, one must be oblivious to the crowd. It is in quiet gardens and fields that we can appreciate the infinite diversity of the forms of life with which nature clothes the earth. It is only in peace of spirit that the voices of the saints speak to us in the *Sermon on the Mount*, the *Little Flowers* of St. Francis, and the *Journal* of John Woolman.

But perhaps I should interpose a further thought at this time. Clive Bell, the disappointed painter turned critic, maintained that culture was primarily a matter of appreciation rather than of creation. This seems to me to be an error. I believe instead that culture is based more upon active work than upon passive absorption. Only if we try to create, do we really understand the problems of design, the nature of the materials with which one must work and the difficulties of so shaping them as to realize our purpose. This is as true in literature as it is in physics; in sculpture, painting, and in music as it is in wood-working, politics, cooking, mountain climbing, and war. Those who sit in the cultural grandstand and content themselves with passing judgment upon the plays and participants miss the real insights and lack the real thrills. Their culture is derivative and somewhat stale, not first-hand and fresh. It is better to be a Michelangelo, a Masaccio, or a Daumier than a Clive Bell or a Roger Fry. It is better to be a Beethoven than an Ernest Newman; and an Eisenhower than a Ralph Ingersoll. It is well for seekers after culture to discard the leisure class interpretation of the arts and to become instead active, even if grossly imperfect, practitioners. Schweitzer is a greater organist because he is also a skilled organ builder.

But whether one concentrates upon appreciation or upon creation (and the truly cultured person will devote himself to both), each of these approaches to culture must be largely carried out in solitude. One must work in loneliness to create. Michelangelo shut the society of Rome and even of Pope Julius himself from out of the Sistine Chapel and labored with intensity of spirit to create his idealized figures of beauty. Beethoven composed his symphonies away from the hubbub of Vienna and Emerson found sanctuary in rural Concord, not in academic Cambridge or urban



Boston The architect knows that he must spend lonely days at his drafting board, the scientist that months and years must be devoted to his laboratory Darwin worked for nearly two decades in the isolation of his Kentish village before he was ready to let the early vision of evolution as revealed on Galapagos go forth to the world with the massed proof of the *Origin of Species*

So it is with all creative artists They cannot work effectively if the world is constantly peering over their shoulders Michelangelo, as Vasari tells us, was careful as he was working on his last *Pieta*, not to let his shadow fall upon the stone from which he was slowly hewing his design For while creation must probably be personal in its origin, it must be impersonal in its execution No shadow of self-consciousness or of posturing may fall upon the work itself if it is to be effective One cannot strike attitudes in private unless one is a consummate ass, like Roscoe Conkling, the politician of the Gilded Age, of whom it was said that he was the only man in America who could strut sitting down To protect one's work against oneself, as well as against the crowd, one must create in quiet

But if solitude is needed in which to develop culture, so is the stream of events the milieu in which character must grow It is true that moral insights come most readily in quiet and that we can best fix the course of our lives through contemplation and silent prayer This is one of the great contributions of the Quakers and of the mystics But action is at once the test and the developer of character Some years ago Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More launched their brand of humanism with its doctrine that the moral muscles must only be flexed in private and that man's only public duty was to use the inner check and to refrain from action This negative doctrine can only produce anemic characters who pursue a fugitive and cloistered virtue forgetful of the fact that virtue itself must, as Milton said, run its due course and that not without dust and heat To be really good, one must be good for something, for virtue like everything else must be functional

It may be possible to be a sunshine patriot and a summer soldier with a heart overflowing with self-proclaimed patriotism, but the real test comes when one must advance over a terrain swept by artillery or machine gun fire or hold on doggedly when outnumbered and exposed to ice, snow, or driving rain That, as we say in the Marine Corps, separates the men from the boys In the fires of danger, hardship and discouragement, the soldier can forge courage and a steadfastness which can endure even unto death itself

There are also many who profess their devotion to the common good but the test is whether they are willing to work for it, to ring the doorbells of an indifferent citizenry and to brave the opposition of the powerful

forces of entrenched greed. He who would defend the common good must be ready to sacrifice leisure and frequently even his own reputation. For special privilege is nearly always ready to besmirk the good name of those who venture forth against it. Indeed I sometimes think that the active practice of the public good requires an even higher type of courage than that required of the combat soldier. For whereas our military enemies seek only to destroy the body but leave the soul unscathed and one's good name unblemished, the first efforts of political opponents seems so often to be concentrated upon the ruining of one's reputation and the embitterment of one's soul.

Similarly it is not hard in solitude to wish all mankind well but the test is whether we do in fact visit the sick, feed the hungry, clothe the naked and protect the weak. Unless we do, our protestations of virtue are but empty words. We give verbal adherence to the idea of charity, but are we truly charitable in our judgments of and in our actions towards our associates? Do we treat them as friendly comrades in a beloved society or as competitive rivals whom we must elbow out of the way? Are we in fact greedy? The test is whether we take for ourselves more than our share of the world's goods, enjoyments, and honors. There is in fact no ethics but social ethics—the ethics of men living kind, useful, and unselfish lives in a common society.

And so one must end. Culture and character, solitude and society, contemplation and creation are all essential parts of the harmonious and integrated personality which as it moves through time can acquire strength and upon occasion give forth those chords of harmony which make of such men a choir, visible and invisible, "whose music is the gladness of the earth."

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 How does Douglas define "culture" and "character"?
- 2 What does Douglas mean by "the pursuit of culture for its own sake"? What does he believe is lacking in those who so pursue culture?
- 3 What does he mean by concentration upon character to the neglect of culture?
- 4 Describe the ideal combination of character and culture which Douglas finds in such people as Jefferson, Lincoln, Jane Addams and others.
- 5 Why does he believe quiet and solitude are necessary to culture and the creative arts?
- 6 Why does he believe activity in "the stream of events" is necessary to the growth of character?
- 7 What is the structure of this essay? Is it persuasive in nature?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What should one do in his own life to achieve the harmonious and integrated personality of which Douglas speaks?

- 2 Can everyone be expected to seek a balance between character and culture or is it right that some should participate in events to the exclusion of culture and that others should confine themselves to cultural pursuits?
- 3 In what specific ways can one try to follow Douglas's ideal in college?
- 4 In American life today which seems to you the greater danger, the neglect of culture or the neglect of character?

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 A great man, and the reasons for his greatness
- 2 The obligation to participate in political activities
- 3 How I plan to develop the cultural side of my life in college
- 4 It takes courage to work for the common good

### HAROLD W. STOKE

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## College Athletics— Education or Show Business?

### I

On the morning of December 7, 1951, in the General Sessions Court in New York City, fourteen tall young men stood before Judge Saul S. Streit. The scene was the climax of the notorious basketball scandals in which players had been convicted of receiving bribes from professional gamblers for throwing basketball games in Madison Square Garden. The judge was stern but for the culprits he tempered justice. Jail sentences and fines were few and light. Judge Streit then looked over the heads of the defendants and hurled angry words at the colleges and universities they represented. He charged that these institutions had so far forgotten their educational mission and had so overemphasized athletics that they themselves had made this scene in his courtroom all but inevitable.

Addressing himself to the colleges, Judge Streit demanded immediate and drastic reforms. Among these were the restoration of athletic respon-

sibilities to faculties and to the academic administrative authorities, the revitalization of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the establishment of an amateur code and of a capable, well-financed policing authority

While there was some dismay (if little surprise) in university circles at the basketball scandals, there was genuine puzzlement about the judge's suggestions for reform. The point that had escaped him was that all his proposals had been tried for years—uniformly without success. If Judge Streit and the countless educators who have tackled this problem had asked themselves why Bradley University, Kentucky, New York University, North Carolina State, or any other university should ever play basketball in Madison Square Garden, they would have started on a line of inquiry which would have brought about a better understanding. Obviously it was no educational interest that brought the teams there, no huge concentration of alumni, no essential training program. It wasn't wholly a matter of money. They were there in response to a far more complex and subtle compulsion—to assist their schools as a part of the system of American higher education to carry out that system's latest and growing responsibility—namely, to provide public entertainment.

In our American society the need for entertainment is an inevitable consequence of the changing conditions of our lives—the lengthening life span, the shorter work week, speed and mobility, industrialization and prosperity. These changes create social vacuums, and for filling social vacuums the American system of education—and particularly higher education—is one of the most efficient devices ever invented. It is flexible, highly varied, and in touch with virtually the entire population, furthermore, it is characterized by a genuine spirit of service. It is manned by aggressive and accommodating people, it is suffused with a thoroughly practical philosophy. Hence, to its already great and growing array of services—its teaching, research, adult education, military training, and general public service—it has added another, public entertainment. This responsibility has been accepted in some instances eagerly, in some instances reluctantly, but nonetheless accepted. Drama, music, radio, and television widen the educational as well as the entertainment services of the universities, wherever these touch the public they possess more of the characteristics of entertainment than of education. Yet of all the instrumentalities which universities have for entertaining the public, the most effective is athletics.

What educational institutions thus far have not seen is that the responsibility for supplying public entertainment is a responsibility different in kind from those they have previously performed. The failure to understand this fact has led to endless strain in the management of athletics, to bewilderment among educators and the public, and even to outright scan-

dal Conceived as education, athletics is inexplicable, corrupting, and uncontrollable, as public entertainment, and even as public entertainment to be provided by educational institutions, athletics becomes comprehensible and manageable

The most essential distinction between athletics and education lies in the institution's own interest in the athlete as distinguished from its interest in its other students. Universities attract students in order to teach them what they do not already know, they recruit athletes only when they are already proficient. Students are educated for something which will be useful to them and to society after graduation, athletes are required to spend their time on activities the usefulness of which disappears upon graduation or soon thereafter. Universities exist to do what they can for students, athletes are recruited for what they can do for the universities. This makes the operation of the athletic program in which recruited players are used basically different from any educational interest of colleges and universities.

The fundamental distinctions between athletics and education are somewhat obscured by several arguments frequently heard. The first is that athletics has "educational values." This is the familiar "character building," "team spirit," "sportsmanship" argument. Anyone who knows the actual operations of athletics will admit that such values could be realized far better if athletics were handled as recreation and physical education. The second argument is that many fine athletes make fine scholastic records—implying that there must not, after all, be any conflict between athletics and education. Again the answer can be short. Big-time athletics requires 20 to 28 hours per week of its devotees, aside from the time spent away from the campus, hence it is bound to detract from an athlete's education. But how can an impoverished athlete get a chance at a college education? I'll answer that question with another. Is he any more entitled to it than anyone else?

## 2

College athletics is public entertainment. Last year football audiences numbered 40 million, and now basketball is outstripping football in attendance. It is estimated that the public pays \$100 million a year to the colleges for admission tickets, and television has added enormously to the number of spectators and to the revenue. Public interest as measured in publicity, newspaper coverage, and attention is far beyond that given to any educational activity. In no major school does the attention given to the appointment of a president compare with that given to the appointment of a coach, and the general public can name many more coaches than presidents.

The organization of this public entertainment is intricate. Most of the larger colleges and universities, private and public, are organized into athletic conferences managed by highly paid commissioners. Through them, complicated athletic schedules are worked out with all the finesse of the international bargaining table, and considerations of finance, publicity, the prospective careers of coaches and even of presidents, are balanced in equations which would baffle electronic computers. Stadiums, field houses, and playing fields are constructed with the entertainment-seeking public primarily in mind. At the time the Yale Bowl was built it would have seated the entire adult population of New Haven, while Michigan could have put twice the population of Ann Arbor into its stadium. The University of Southern California and the University of California at Los Angeles are big schools, but even they would scarcely need the Memorial Stadium for their students and faculty. Obviously the real underwriters of bonds which build athletic plants are not students, but the public. Many an athletic director caught in a squeeze of high costs and inadequate gate receipts wishes to heaven he had all of the student tickets to sell to the people willing to pay more for them.

The same force lies back of the other features of athletics—the numerous and high-priced coaching specialists, the elaborate half-time shows, the colorful bands (supported almost as completely by scholarships as are the athletes and for the same purpose), the frolicsome majorettes, the carefully planned and executed spontaneous student rallies and demonstrations, the food, drink, and program concessions. None of these could possibly serve any educational purpose for which a college or university exists, but they are wonderful aids to public entertainment.

Perhaps most significant of all is the fact that the rules of the games themselves are now constructed and reconstructed with their entertainment value uppermost. Like dramatic coaches and directors bringing into being a Broadway production, the coaches and athletic directors gather each year to adjust the rules of football and basketball for the purpose of heightening the dramatic and entertainment value. The substitution rule, who may run with the ball, what may be allowed to happen within the ten-yard line or within the last four minutes, the nature of the penalties, and, currently, the one or two-platoon system in football are matters which are governed by their effect upon the entertainment and upon the welfare of the enterprise. In basketball, the rules have been changed to encourage high scoring, constant running and action, alternate chances at scoring in order to provide the murderously exciting finishes which now characterize the game. Revisions are made each year only after the most elaborate study and consideration and with a wariness which would do credit to the fuse workers in a munitions factory.

Consider the Bowl games. They are important influences on athletic

policies and at the same time irrefutable evidence that athletics, so far as the Bowls are concerned, have no educational significance whatsoever. So far as I know, no one seriously claims that they do.

All of the Bowls for obvious reasons are located in the South or in winter vacation areas. They are immensely successful business promotions, there is nothing about them remotely related to education. As one man put it "Rose Bowl, Sugar Bowl, Orange Bowl—all are gravy bowls!" A half-million people saw the games in the eight major bowls last January 1, and it is estimated 70 million more heard them on radio or saw them on television. Receipts were almost \$25 million. The distribution of the money follows a kind of formula in each conference—a large percentage to each school participating in the Bowl, a smaller percentage to each school in the conference and to the conference treasury itself. A more subtle formula to ensure support for Bowl games could hardly be devised. Participation in one of the Big Four Bowls—Rose, Sugar, Cotton, and Orange—may bring each participating school as much as \$125,000. Everyone profits—except the players, whose amateur status has thus far confined them to such grubby rewards as gifts of gold watches, blankets, free tickets which can be scalped, sometimes a little cash—the last usually secretly. Under pressure from the players and perhaps from a sense of institutional guilt at the indefensible exploitation, the rewards to players are improving, but they still are far below the A S C A P and Equity pay scales for big-time entertainers.

### 3

How is all this to be made compatible with the nation's educational system? Most troubles arise from the failure of colleges to see that in supplying public entertainment they have embarked upon an operation which is different from their educational functions—and one that requires different management. Colleges have acted as if athletics were merely an extension of student recreation. Since athletes come from the same high schools as other students, are about the same age, and do get a kind of education, it has been assumed that the academic regulations applicable to the general run of students should also apply to athletes. We overlook completely the different reasons for which each is there. Hence schools have prescribed the same formal academic requirements for both the athlete and the nonathlete—a minimum number of hours must be taken, a certain number of courses must be passed, systematic progress, however slow, must be made toward a degree, and a host of other regulations must be followed.

Yet athletics, like a corrosive acid, has eaten through every academic regulation—to the great frustration, bewilderment, and cynicism of the

educational community It has defeated faculties, forced the resignations of presidents, wrecked coaches, and undercut the support of institutions where the efforts to apply academic regulations have been insistent Where such regulations have been successfully applied they have all but killed the athletic programs, or put them in abeyance, as at New York University, Fordham, or Pittsburgh, until a more "understanding" attitude permits revival There are, of course, many schools—Oberlin, Swarthmore, Haverford, Bowdoin, to name a few—that attract little attention from the entertainment-seeking public because they make little attempt to supply public entertainment

The truth is that the appetite of the public cannot be satisfied by the quality of entertainment which can be provided by athletics governed by academic regulations Consequently, at institutions which are meeting the public's demands, academic regulations must be ignored, compromised, or eliminated Admission requirements for athletes have become less formidable than they used to be, and usually an arrangement can be made for the boys to make up high school deficiencies The requirements as to courses, progress toward degrees, and even grades can generally be met by either a flexible elective system or the "tailored curriculum" leading to a highly specialized "degree" in which many hours of handball, swimming, and coaching can be included Where this does not suffice, every athletic department of any size provides at its own expense counseling and tutoring service for any of its men likely to get into trouble Not all athletes need these negations of educational regulations, but the point is that when required the negations must be available How compelling the necessity is can be estimated by the situations which come to light when these compromises are not sufficient—the wholesale cheating at West Point, the alteration of records at William and Mary, special examinations, and countless other devices involving various degrees of accommodation or even fraud and misdemeanor No matter what the regulation, if it prevents athletics from supplying the public entertainment for which it exists, a way around must be found This has been the fate which has uniformly attended the regulative efforts of faculties, administrators, code committees, accrediting associations, and even the N C A A itself

Why should this conflict be so irreconcilable? There are many reasons, but perhaps the most compelling is that adequate entertainment can only be provided by winning teams No amount of gushy sentiment about "playing the game" will conceal the fact that the public wants its teams to win Victory is a part of the total titillation If the public can't have it from one source it will transfer its loyalties and money to some other Chick Meehan filled Yankee Stadium with football fans roaring for N Y U, but when de-emphasis came, N Y U found that 6,000 was a



good crowd to watch it play Fordham, the archrival "When Michigan loses, someone has to pay" may be a slogan at Ann Arbor, but it sums up the attitude of all schools with athletic entertainment programs. This means that to supply entertainment, the schools must get the entertainers.

The recruitment of players is the key to most of the athletic anxieties of college presidents, the desperation of coaches, the pressure of alumni, and the activities of outside influences, business and otherwise. A chain reaction of undesirable consequences follows. The school must get the player, and the best one, the player knows this, and the bidding starts. Sometimes negotiations are carried on by a parent or other relative in order that the player may be technically free of all nonamateur bargains, otherwise he becomes a part of a corrupt bargain about which, if questions arise, he must lie or forever keep silent. Gradually the "board, room, and tuition" formula—plus a little extra, if necessary—has won acceptance. Sometimes the myth of employment persists as the justification for such payments, but it is now generally acknowledged to be a myth. The effort to limit the number of such scholarships is actually an effort to equalize competition between schools. The conferences often set a limit—but there are ways around it, the junior college "farm system" for one.

The bidding, of course, is highest for the best. In this field rumor is rife. There is the cartoon of the coach who angrily turns to one of his players and says "Jones, you're through! Turn in your suit and your convertible." The deal may have a hundred variations, from a pledge to help the ambitious athlete on through medical school to assistance to various relatives. My own experience leads me to believe that the bizarre bargain is less frequent than educators and the public think, but is crucial nonetheless. One or two stars can transform a team into a winner and are worth what they cost. Schools bargain with all kinds of appeals—the prestige of the Ivy League may appeal to the boy from the Middle West, religious affiliation may take a boy to Notre Dame, the lavish dormitory facilities for athletes may tip the scales for Louisiana State or Texas. Most conferences have rules which prevent an athlete who has signed with one school from leaving it to join another, even though he later discovers the immense advantages of the second school. Conferences resist recruits from outside their territory, yet raiding is universal. By a dozen devices high school coaches are encouraged to become feeders for particular colleges and universities, sometimes by the flattering appointment to a coaching school staff, support for a bigger job, or even cash. Thus the web of recruitment is widespread, subtle, and effective.

The services of the American educational system in the field of public entertainment cannot be taken lightly—least of all by the educational institutions themselves. It may not be an ideal use of an educational institu-

tion to supply public entertainment, but the public interest exists, and for the institutions, either the necessity or the willingness to supply it also exists. The schools which would like to refuse will be compelled to supply it to keep up with their willing rivals. Their only choice is whether they will manage the entertainment in such a way as to prevent damage to themselves as educational institutions—damage which the present methods certainly entail. These methods frequently create financial obligations which imperil educational development because they have contractual priority over educational budgets. Those who recruit players and the players who are recruited are too often corrupted not because of the bargains they strike, but because the bargains are in violation of pledges all have agreed to uphold. Influences outside universities are encouraged to seek control of educational operations—influences which are seldom willing to confine their interests to athletics. Athletics requires an atmosphere of academic accommodation to its necessities, to the great cynicism of faculties and students. It has bred a kind of humiliating schizophrenia in educational administrators who are compelled to defend with platitudes what they do not believe or to keep an uneasy silence. It has created a kind of amused tolerance toward institutions on the part of the very public which buys the entertainment—a tolerance which says that whatever the virtues and respectability of higher education on all other scores, it must be given the privilege of this secret sin.

#### 4

At the risk of scornful disagreement let me outline how, it seems to me, the great strain in our educational institutions can be reduced. The first and most crucial step is purely intellectual—to make the admission, both inside and outside the universities, that our programs of intercollegiate athletics are operated primarily as public entertainment and not as educational responsibilities. This will lay a foundation for entirely new solutions to the problem.

With the acceptance of this concept most of the undesirable stresses and strains will begin to disappear. Athletics—that is, *winning* athletics—now becomes a legitimate university operation. Recruiting becomes not only legal but justifiable. To get the best athletes becomes not only understandable but commendable in exactly the same way that one seeks for excellence in any department of the university. One gives the athlete what the resources will allow—just as Illinois offers the graduate assistant in history or chemistry what it can to attract the best. No one thinks the less of Illinois because it can outbid Montana for graduate students. In short, athletic practices which are not at all appropriate to “educational” activ-

ties become acceptable and legitimate as parts of a program of public entertainment

The same principle clarifies the position and character of the coaching staff. Let it be the best that can be obtained, as large and specialized as the situation requires. Let it be freed to meet its obligations without the moral strain imposed by the necessity to circumvent impossible requirements. The financial situation likewise becomes manageable. Since athletics is to be managed as entertainment, it need not in logic or in fact be a charge on the educational budget, and just as no educational institution expects to support itself from athletics, so athletics should not expect to be a charge on education. Self-support for athletics as public entertainment is at once a financial liberation and a restraint.

And why should there be concern about the academic record of a young man who comes to a university primarily to play on a team and whom the university has brought for exactly that purpose? I submit that nothing is lost by relieving all athletes of the obligation to meet academic requirements, if they cannot or do not wish to do so. Let us be courageous enough to admit that the university's interest in them is that they be good athletes, not that they be good students. It is the insistence that they be students which creates the problem both for the faculty and for the athletic managers, and to the detriment of both. Of course, if a boy wishes to be a student as well as an athlete, by all means encourage him, but in that case the fact that he is an athlete need not enter into his status as a student any more than his grades as a student should be made to affect his effectiveness as an athlete. The athlete will then for the first time be on a par with every other student who works his way through school. His academic progress will be exactly proportional to the time and interest he has beyond the demands of his employment.

What if the athlete has no interest whatsoever in his further education? A team entirely made up of professionals is not the solution for the colleges. The best solution is a prescription of academic work suited to the tastes and talents of the athlete but with the clear understanding by professors and athletes alike that the record as a student will be neither a hindrance nor a help to athletic success.

What? someone says. Have unbridled bidding for athletes? No eligibility rules? No discipline? By no means—but let these things arise, as they will, from athletic and not from academic sources and necessities. Let eligibility rules be drawn and enforced by those who are most concerned about them—the athletic managements—not by faculties. Who can be counted on to expose infractions of eligibility rules? Opponents! Every roster of players is exchanged between coaches—why should a faculty committee bother? Who is hurt if the ineligible player plays? The opposition! Who is the best insurance that he won't? The opposition!

No, faculties and administrators have gratuitously assumed a lot of unnecessary burdens—and to what purpose or to what effect it is hard to see

The relinquishment of formal academic—not institutional—control over athletics will have very substantial advantages both for athletics and for education. The first is the restoration of institutional and personal integrity. Gone will be the necessity to keep up the pretense that at the present time suffuses the discussion of athletics as a part of an educational program. The establishment of single mindedness will be the greatest advantage, for educational institutions are basically devoted to intellectual honesty. Such honesty will free athletics as well as education from the schizophrenia from which they both now suffer.

A very valuable outcome will also be the dissipation of the sentimentality which currently surrounds college athletics in the mind of the public. This myth is carefully preserved not for its truth but for its utility. Listen to any major coach talk about his team and you will see how little such sentimentality is justified. He refers to his "material," not to boys, he discusses weakness at end and tackle and backfield, completely oblivious of the feelings of his men. There is not a player whom he will not instantly displace if he can get a better one. One of the most unhappy tasks that athletic managements must perform is to get rid of players to whom scholarships have been given—commitments made—but who can't quite make the grade on the field. Perhaps the public which sees the universities as operating departments of public entertainment and sees athletes as assistants in the department will come to think of the whole matter a little differently—to the great relief of everyone concerned.

When doctors find that a given treatment results in no improvement, they re-examine their diagnosis, when scientists find that experiments produce no anticipated results, they revise their basic hypothesis. Educators now find that what was once the recreation of students in school has been transformed into a responsibility of the educational system to supply the public with entertainment. It is essential that educators carry through a fundamental revision of concepts of athletic management appropriate to this transformation.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What does Stoke believe is primarily responsible for the engagement of colleges in "big time" athletics?
- 2 What distinction does he believe should be drawn between athletics and education?
- 3 What evidence does he give for the view that entertainment is the primary aim of college athletics?
- 4 What changes does he advocate in the management of athletics by colleges and universities?
- 5 What effects of these changes does Stoke predict?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 In your opinion, is Stoke's assumption that colleges can legitimately engage in entertainment with little or no reference to academic matters a proper one?
- 2 Do you think dropping big time athletics would have bad effects on educational institutions?
- 3 Do you think that football players are poorly recompensed for their efforts?
- 4 What objection would you have personally if your college decided to drop intercollegiate athletics such as football?
- 5 What sort of athletics do you think are genuinely educational, or might be made so?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Why intercollegiate athletics are (or are not) here to stay
- 2 Eligibility rules are (or are not) justifiable
- 3 Intramural sports as the answer to overemphasis on athletics
- 4 Does football pay?

## *Chapter Two*

# Thinking Straight



WE DO NOT THINK ENOUGH ABOUT THINKING

JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON

## Introduction

One of the principal goals of education is to help students learn to think straight. After gaining some insight into the problems of education discussed in chapter 1, therefore, it is appropriate that we consider some of the important aspects of thinking.

The quality of our individual lives and of society as a whole depends in a large measure on our ability to use our minds effectively in both practical and creative ways. If we accept other people's ideas without examining them critically, we become mere automata. Without reflection we shall never be able to use what we supposedly know, and we shall certainly never be able to achieve anything original. Growth and development depend on the use of our minds, not on the mere accumulation of facts. For that reason the goal of liberal education has often been stated to be the teaching of how to think rather than the teaching of what to think or the imparting of any particular body of information.

Learning to think effectively is of particular importance to persons living in a democratic society. Democratic life requires the pooling of many individual, and one hopes thoughtful, conclusions about problems to make society's decisions. We believe it better to have every one think about the problems which confront us than to allow someone else to do our thinking for us. Both as educated persons and as democratic citizens there can be no question of the importance of this section of our book.

In the selection which opens this section, Ernest Dimnet, French priest and author of the well known book *The Art of Thinking* emphasizes the way in which our minds work as we do ordinary thinking about our daily affairs. He stresses the flow of images which we discover when we make a successful effort at introspection and the important part these play in the workings of our minds. In this way Dimnet gives us valuable insight into the nature of the instrument by which our thinking must be done.

One of the most important products of thought is, of course, creation. As one of our greatest compliments we speak of certain people as creative. We mean that they use their minds in such a way as to



produce new knowledge and ideas. Since great changes can be wrought in man and in the world by new knowledge and ideas, creative thought must be of absorbing interest to anyone with intellectual ambitions of any sort. Lancelot Law Whyte, who has himself been a creative thinker in the fields of physics and invention, provides our second selection with his essay 'Where Do Those Bright Ideas Come From?' In it he utilizes the experiences of creative thinkers in various fields to help explain some of the important characteristics of creative thought. Just as Dimmet stresses the unconscious nature of a great deal of our thought, so Whyte stresses the necessity of allowing the unconscious to function, after we have been working on a problem for some time, by turning our attention to some other activity. Under such circumstances good ideas seem to spring unbidden from the unconscious. Perhaps it is important to notice in passing that one must have been actively engaged in attempting to find an answer to a problem before the unconscious can help. The unconscious continues what has been consciously begun.

In the third article in this section, *The Method of Scientific Investigation* by Thomas Henry Huxley, we turn to the kind of thinking which has become characteristic of our time—the attempt to explain phenomena by beginning with a set of observed data, setting up possible explanations, choosing the one which seems best to fit the facts, and then testing it in various ways until it can be considered verified. By such a process we arrive at scientific laws. Huxley, one of the important thinkers of his time in England especially in the fields of science and its relation to religion, did much to make clear the nature of scientific thought to his generation. If we are to understand our modern world, we too must be acquainted with this kind of thinking. Huxley clarifies it by his use of familiar everyday examples to explain the various steps.

In the final selection, 'Getting at the Truth,' Marchette Chute, successful literary researcher and writer, deals with a very practical problem in thinking—how to separate facts from half-truths and inventions. Although she approaches the problem from the standpoint of the literary researcher, her conclusion that 'you will never succeed in getting at the truth if you think you know, ahead of time, what

the truth ought to be" is true for any area of thought and a basic principle for every kind of straight thinking

These articles should open up the field of thinking for us and induce us to do more thinking about thinking. Primarily we need to get to work using our minds on the information and ideas supplied to us by our classes. Then we need to use everything we know to improve our thought processes. Some program for doing these things is the beginning of education.

## ERNEST DIMNET

(1866 1954), better known perhaps as Abbe Dimnet was Canon of the Cathedral of Cambrai in France and later professor in Stanislas College in Paris Deeply interested in Franco American relations he wrote ten books in English and lectured frequently in the United States The Art of Thinking, from which this article is taken is his most popular book. [Copyright, 1928 by Simon and Schuster, Inc British publishers Jonathan Cape Limited Reprinted by permission]

### On Thinking

A familiar scene Five o'clock late in October The sunset over the reddening garden You are standing near the doorsill, looking, and not looking, thinking Somebody steals by and you hear the words whispered "a penny for your thoughts " What is your answer?

Later in the day you are deep, or seem to be deep, in a book But your face does not look as it usually does when you are happy in your reading your contracted brow reveals intense concentration, too intense for mere reading In fact, you are miles away, and to the questions "What are you thinking? What book is that?" you answer very much as you did when caught in that reverie, during the afternoon "Oh! Thinking of nothing", or, "Thinking of all sorts of things " Indeed, you were thinking of so many things that it was as if you had been thinking of nothing Once more you were conscious of something experienced many times before our mind is not like a brilliantly lit and perfectly ordered room, it is much more like an encumbered garret inhabited by moths born and grown up in half lights our thoughts, the moment we open the door to see them better the drab little butterflies vanish

The consciousness of this phenomenon is discouraging, of course This accounts for the fact that, when offered a penny for our thoughts, we generally look, not only puzzled, but embarrassed, and anxious to be let alone not only by the questioner but by the question as well We are like the puppy who is willing to bark once at his own image in the mirror and to snap eagerly behind it, but who, after the second trial, looks away in disgust. Yet, with some curiosity and some practice, it is not impossible to have, at least, a peep at one's mind It should not be attempted when we are too abstracted that is to say, when our consciousness is completely off its guard but there are favorable occasions When we are reading the newspaper and the quickly changing subjects begin to tire, without quite exhausting us, when the motion of the train or of the car sets our thoughts to a certain rhythm which may soon become abstraction or drowsiness

but still is only a slackening of the mental processes, when the lecture we hear is neither good enough to rivet our attention, nor bad enough to irritate us, then, and every time we are in a mental lull, is our chance to get a glimpse of our mind as it really works and as it reveals our innermost nature. By a sudden stiffening of our consciousness, a quick face-about inwards, we can, as it were, solidify a section of mental stream which, during three or four seconds, will lie ready for our inspection. If one succeeds in doing it once, one will certainly feel like doing it again, for no examination of conscience is so strikingly illuminating as that one, and the more frequent it will be, the easier, at least during certain periods, it will also become.

Why not do it now? A penny for your thoughts! What are you thinking of?

You look up, surprised at what you regard as an exhibition of very poor taste in a writer.

—“Thinking? Why, I am thinking of your book. You may not be as interested in writing, as I am in reading it. I love this subject.”

—“Yes, I saw you were remarkably attentive, that’s why I interrupted you. Had you been wandering, it would have been useless. So you love this subject?”

—“I do indeed, and wish you would go on. Books should not talk.”

—“When you say you love this subject, you mean it interests you, it excites something in you, in short, it makes you think.”

—“Quite.”

—“Of course, these thoughts which occur to you as you read are your own, they are no mere reflections of what I am saying, and that is the chief reason for which you enjoy them as they rise from behind my sentences. Is it not so?”

—“Very likely, Sir. I begin to like this conversation.”

—“Yes, it is about you, I knew you would like it. So, these thoughts which are your own and not mine are exterior to this book. Don’t you think they could be called a sort of distraction?”

—“It would be rather unfair, Sir. I assure you I am following you closely, yet, I must admit that I am not trying to memorize what you say. It would spoil all the pleasure I find in this. I am even willing to admit that my pleasure is my own and therefore might be called, as you say, a sort of distraction. In fact, I was thinking.”

—“Ah! here we are! You were thinking?”

—“Well, I was thinking of a farm up in Maine, where there used to be a garret like the one you spoke of. In summer, when we were there, the smell of winter apples was still in it, and I loved it. I would sit there for hours, as a boy, thinking. You see, after all I was thinking of thinking. As a matter of fact, often when I see the picture which gives me the deep-

est impression of happy thinking—the portrait of Erasmus writing—I think of the old garret I have no doubt that I thought of Erasmus, a few minutes ago, for I was positively annoyed, for a moment, at the recollection of a man who once stood before that picture and asked me who is this old fellow looking down his long nose? I hate a fool. The memory of this one actually made me fidget in my chair, and I had to make an effort to think of something else.”

—“You see that I was not far wrong, you have been thinking of a number of things which were not in this book.”

—“Yes, but they came because of the book, and I should not be surprised if I were to think of your book, remember whole passages of it, I mean, tomorrow while doing important work at my office.”

—“Thank you. Have you been thinking of that too?”

—“Why, it would be difficult not to. What I shall be signing tomorrow involves a sum I might take five years to make. However, I am almost sure that everything will go well and I can buy poor Jim the partnership he wants.”

—“In the meantime here’s the penny I owe you. For I begin to know your thoughts pretty well. Naturally they are, every one of them, about you, and that is as it should be. There are, of course, in your mind, thoughts hidden so deep that no amount of digging up could reveal them, but there is no doubt that they would be even nearer your *ego* than those you have discovered in the course of our conversation. Sometimes, very unexpectedly, we become aware of the tingling of our arteries in our heads, even of the fact that we are alive, this consciousness is of no use whatever to us, unless it somehow concurs in keeping us alive, but we are lavish when our Self is at stake. Do not imagine that I am reproaching you.”

—“You would be ungrateful, for let me repeat that I have seldom read anything so attentively as this book.”

—“Certainly. Yet, you must also admit that while you were interested in this book you were interested in something else. It is so with everybody. Have you ever heard that Sir Walter Scott, when he had found the nucleus of a new novel by which his imagination would naturally be engrossed, would, however, read volume after volume that had no reference to his subject, merely because reading intensified the working of his brain? These books did for his power of invention what the crowds in the city did for Dickens’s. When you say that you were reading this book attentively, you mean that your intellect was expending some share of your consciousness—let us say one fifth or, at best, one third of it—on the book. But your intellect is only a sort of superior clerk doing outside jobs for you. You, yourself, did not cease for all that, doing the work of your

Self, infinitely more important to you than any theory. What is important to you is the garret in which you used to muse away hours with the smell of apples floating around you, the picture of Erasmus which you love, your undying indignation at the man who did not appreciate that picture, your son's future and an exceptional chance of improving it. All the time you were imagining that the *Art of Thinking* was making you think, you were thinking of Jim, Erasmus, the fool, the garret and business, undoubtedly too, of dozens of other things we have not been able to trace back to your consciousness. Those thoughts, which you are tempted to call distractions, are what your Self is thinking in spite of the book, and, to tell the truth, the book is your distraction. Even writing can be the same thing—Shall I tell you what my Self thinks while the superior clerk holds my pen? It thinks that I should do my work with perfect happiness if, two hours ago, I had not seen a poor stray cat wandering in the drizzle with two frightened kittens at her side. I love cats as much as you hate fools."

Introspection, as it is called, looking inwards, while the mind is active, will always disclose similar things. Psychologists speak of the "mental stream," and this expression alone has meant an immense progress in the domain of interior observation as compared with the misleading division of the soul into separate faculties. In reality, the flux in our brain carries along images—remembered or modified—feelings, resolves, and intellectual, or partly intellectual conclusions, in vague or seething confusion. And this process never stops, not even in our sleep, any more than a river ever stops in its course. But the mental stream is more like a mountain brook, constantly hindered in its course, and whirling as often as it flows. When we look in we are conscious of the perpetual motion, but, if we do more than merely peep and at once look away, we promptly notice the circular displacement and reappearance of whole psychological trains.

These trains are invariably produced by some image in whose wake they follow. The gentleman with whom I just had such an enlightening conversation had his mind full of a multitude of images—inconsiderable reflections, as swift and also as broken and impossible to arrest as the wavelets in a stream—but he was conscious, or semi-conscious of only a few. What were they? A room in a country house, the picture of Erasmus by Holbein a fool, Jim. To change our simile—the more we use, the nearer we shall be to the endlessly changing reality—these representations were like the larger and brighter fragments in a kaleidoscope. To these the mind of the gentleman would every few minutes revert.

It is hardly necessary to say that these images acted upon him as all images act upon us. We are attracted by some and repelled by others.

The old apple room was altogether satisfactory, so would Erasmus have been, had it not been for that silly man, and, in time, even the silly man would have been tolerable because he produced not only irritation but a pleasant sense of superiority. As for Jim, it was delightful to see his not very good looking face transformed by joy as he heard his father begin "Well, old man, it's all right", but it was the reverse to imagine him, a year from now, taking the same 8 17 train to do the same inferior work. Probably when the gentleman imagined he was smelling the shrivelled-up apples, happy Jim was behind the door, but when the fool's unforgettable six words were heard in that satisfied oily voice, Pelham station and the silent slaves streaming in with poor Jim were not far. I say probably, for who knows? Quite possibly, relief from an unpleasant picture was sought in a pleasanter one. The stream runs fast and so deep between its brambly sides that it is impossible to see anything clearly in it.

All we can say is 1 That most of our mental operations are inseparable from images, or are produced by images. We do not differ in this from the dear animals near us. (If anybody does not realise that a dog's brain registers an encyclopedia of images, sounds and odors as large as a dictionary and far better remembered, the dog's behavior will be entirely unintelligible.) 2 That those images closely correspond to wishes or repulsions, to things we want or do not want, so that this wanting or not wanting seems to be the ultimate motive power in our psychology, probably in connection with elementary conditions in our being. 3 That inevitably, people will reveal in their thoughts and speeches, in their outlook on life and in their lives themselves, the quality of the images filling their minds. Investigation and estimation of these images, together with investigation and estimation of our likes and dislikes, will tell us what we are worth morally more accurately than even our actions, for they are the roots of action. But to this we shall revert later.

Surely, you say, what you have described so far is not thought. Our brain must be free sometimes from images, from likes or dislikes, from wants and repulsions. There must be a superior kind of mental operation, something immaterial resulting in abstractions. How are mathematical and philosophical systems evolved? What is logic?

Yes, there are languages abbreviating billions of experiences, and there are formulas filling whole libraries. The one of our savage ancestors, who, wrestling with onomatopoeia and almost in despair at seeing a shade of meaning which he could not express, for the first time invented the future tense by conglobing "to-morrow," or "sun rise," or "morning hunger" with a crude verb-noun, was a genius, and intellectual work has produced libraries which, in their turn, keep the noblest minds occupied, and all this tends to abstraction. But the study of it belongs to the Science of

Thought, while we are here concerned only with the Art of Thinking  
Yet, it is useful, even for our purpose, to say a word about this less practical aspect of the subject

We have an idea that thought—as diamonds are wrongly supposed to do—can exist in a pure state, and is elaborated without images We feel sure that we are not infrequently conscious of conclusions, practical or speculative, arrived at without the help of images What are those?

Ah! What are they? But, first of all, are there any? How can we be sure that there are any? Every time we really succeed in watching our mental process we discover the presence of images You say "thoughts," "pure thought," and you are persuaded that you say this without any accompanying image, but are you right or wrong? While you say "thought," is it, or is it not possible that you see a man's head, or his brow, or the inside of his head visualized, not as a horrible brain jelly, but perhaps as a more or less complicated wire frame destined to classify and keep in place the results arrived at, or as an infinitely delicate clockwork?

The names of mental operations which are now abstract were not so originally To *see* and to *know* are the same word in Greek, to *ponder*, which sounds so intellectual, obviously means to *weigh*, to *think* is the ghostlike descendant of a much rougher word meaning to *seem* *logic* and *speech* are the same word, so, in fine—as if to protest against too much intellectual pride—are *idea* and *image*!

Images can be subconscious and harder to detect than people who have not tried suppose We can be conscious of one reel unrolling itself—with many crazy interruptions—in our inward cinema, and not be quite conscious of another fixed image, visible, but not easily visible, through the film Nothing is more frequent than this superposition of two sets of images progressing with variable speeds They account for the unexpected conclusions at which we arrive while apparently attentive to entirely different matters A gentleman whose mind is occupied, while reading, with the tiny photographs his memory once took of a house up in Maine, may suddenly hear an inward voice say clearly to him "It is very bad to read when you need not," and may shut up the book at once Why? The process of solidification mentioned above would disclose under the Maine film the image of Dr Wilmer looking rather grave, at the last visit, and since then hardly absent one instant from the subconscious There would be three strata (perhaps more, of course) perceptible in the same consciousness

### Book on the Art of Thinking *House in Maine*

*Oculist*

Sometimes we are aware of a succession of images driving in fact, tele-

*Dimnet On Thinking*



## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Thoughts while listening to music
- 2 How to keep your mind on what you are studying
- 3 Reading matter that keeps you from thinking
- 4 How advertising makes its readers daydream
- 5 My photograph album (high school or college annual) (scrapbook) and the thoughts it arouses

## LANCELOT LAW WHYTE

born 1896 has been widely interested in science and technology especially in the development of power jets. He is the author of *The Unitary Principle in Physics and Biology*, *Everyman Looks Forward*, and *The Next Development in Man*, which emphasize the synthesis of the sciences [From *Harper's Magazine*, July 1951, reprinted by permission of the author]

### *Where Do Those Bright Ideas Come From?*

as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown  
*A Midsummer Night's Dream*

There are few experiences quite so satisfactory as getting a good idea. You've had a problem, you've thought about it till you were tired, forgotten it and perhaps slept on it, and then flash! when you weren't thinking about it suddenly the answer has come to you, as a gift from the gods. You're pleased with it, and feel good. It may not be right, but at least you can try it out.

Of course all ideas don't come like that, but the interesting thing is that so many do, particularly the most important ones. They burst into the mind, glowing with the heat of creation. How they do it is a mystery. Psychology does not yet understand even the ordinary processes of conscious thought, but the emergence of new ideas by a "leap in thought," as Dewey put it, is particularly intriguing, because they must have come from somewhere. For the moment let us assume that they come from the "unconscious." This is reasonable, for the psychologists use this term to describe mental processes which are unknown to the subject, and creative thought consists precisely in what was unknown becoming known.

We have all experienced this sudden arrival of a happy idea, but it is easiest to examine it in the great creative figures, many of whom experi-

enced it in an intensified form and have put it on record in their memoirs and letters. One can draw examples from genius in any realm, from religious mysticism, philosophy, and literature to art and music, and even in mathematics, science, and technical invention, though these are often thought to rest solely on logic and experiment. It seems that all truly creative activity depends in some degree on these signals from the unconscious, and the more highly intuitive the person, the sharper and more dramatic the signals become.

Here, for example, is Richard Wagner conceiving the prelude to "Rhinégold," as told by Wagner himself and recounted by Newman in his biography. Wagner had been occupied with the general idea of the "Ring" for several years, and for many weary months had been struggling to make a start with the actual composition. On September 4, 1863, he reached Spezia sick with dysentery, crawled to a hotel, could not sleep for noise without and fever within, took a long walk the next day, and in the afternoon flung himself on a couch intending to sleep. And then at last the miracle happened for which his subconscious mind had been crying out for so many months. Falling into a trance-like state, he suddenly felt, he says, as though he were sinking in a mighty flood of water.

The rush and roar soon took musical shape within my brain as the chord of E flat major, surging incessantly in broken chords. Yet the pure triad of E flat major never changed but seemed by its steady persistence to impart infinite significance to the element in which I was sinking. I awoke from my half sleep in terror, feeling as though the waves were rushing high above my head. I at once recognized that the orchestral prelude to the "Rhinégold" which for a long time I must have carried about within me, yet had never been able to fix definitely, had at last come to being within me, and I quickly understood the very essence of my own nature: the stream of life was not to flow to me from without, but from within.

In this example, which is exceptional only in the violence of the emotions, the conscious mind at the moment of creation knew nothing of the actual processes by which the solution was found. As a contrast we may take a famous story—the discovery by Henri Poincaré, the great French mathematician, of a new mathematical method called the Fuchsian functions. For here we see the conscious mind in a person of the highest ability, actually watching the unconscious at work, if that paradox may be allowed. Poincaré describes how he came to write his first treatise on these functions:

For a fortnight I had been attempting to prove that there could not be any function analogous to what I have since called the Fuchsian functions. I was at that time very ignorant. Every day I sat down at my table and spent an

hour or two trying a great number of combinations, and I arrived at no result. One night I took some black coffee, contrary to my custom, and was unable to sleep. A host of ideas kept surging in my head, I could almost feel them jostling one another, until two of them coalesced, so to speak, to form a stable combination. When morning came, I had established the existence of one class of Fuchsian functions. I had only to verify the results, which took only a few hours.

While the Wagner story illustrates the sudden explosion of a new conception into consciousness, in this one we see the conscious mind observing the new combinations being formed in that part of the mind whose operations are normally beyond the range of conscious attention. A third type of creative experience is exemplified by the dreams which came to Descartes at the age of twenty three and determined the path he was to follow for the rest of his life. Descartes tells how he had vainly searched for certainty, first in the world of books, and then in the world of men, and how in a triple dream on November 10, 1619, he made the crucial discovery that he could only find certainty in his own thoughts, *cogito ergo sum*. This dream filled him with intense religious enthusiasm, because it had brought to him the "simple and fertile idea, all sparkling with angelic luster" (Maritain), which provided the foundation of the "admirable science" which it was his mission to create. Freud classified this dream as one of those whose content is very close to conscious thought.

Wagner's, Poincaré's and Descartes' experiences are representative of countless others in every realm of culture. The unconscious is certainly the source of instinctive activity and therefore sometimes of conflict with the demands of reason, as Freud emphasized. But in creative thought the unconscious is responsible, not for conflict, but for the production of new organized forms from relatively disorganized elements.

## 2

The processes of creative activity display several striking features. One of the most frequent is the occurrence of flashes of insight outside the hours of regular work, during periods of physical activity or at odd moments of reverie or relaxation when the mind is daydreaming. Poincaré tells how the further steps of his discovery of the Fuchsian functions came to him, with a sense of absolute certainty, "just as I put my foot on the step" (of a wagonette), and again, "as I was crossing the street." Similar examples are endless, and give comforting glimpses of the ordinary daily life of genius. Mozart got the idea for the melody of the "Magic Flute" quintet while playing billiards, Berlioz found himself humming a musical phrase he had long sought in vain as he rose from a

dive while bathing in the Tiber, Sir William Hamilton, a great mathematical physicist, thought of quaternions (a new mathematical method) while strolling with his wife in the streets of Dublin, and the chemist Kekulé saw the atoms dancing in mid air and so conceived his theory of atomic groupings while riding on the top of a London bus

So familiar is this phenomenon that many have taken advantage of it and have developed techniques to woo their shy genius. The prolific Haydn, with 125 symphonies and hundreds of other compositions to his credit, says, "When my work does not advance I retire into the oratory with my rosary, and say an Ave, immediately ideas come to me." Many, like Hamilton, have found that walking encourages the appearance of ideas. Thus Mozart tells how "taking a drive or walking after a good meal, or in the night when I cannot sleep, thoughts crowd into my mind as easily as you could wish", James Watt saw how the waste of heat in a steam engine could be avoided by condensing steam, in a flash of inspiration on a walk to the golf house, Helmholtz, the German scientist and philosopher, records how "happy ideas come particularly readily during the slow ascent of hills on a sunny day", and many persons devoted to creative work have carried scraps of paper with them everywhere so that nothing of the precious flashes of revelation shall be lost.

"Sleeping on it" also produces good results. Sir Walter Scott used to say to himself, "Never mind, I shall have it at seven o'clock tomorrow morning." Gauss, one of the greatest mathematicians, put as heading to his paper on the "Law of Induction" the note "Found 23rd January 1835—7 0 A M before rising." And Helmholtz says, "Often they come as soon as one wakes up in the morning."

The suddenness with which ideas come is often stressed. "You feel a little electric shock striking you in the head—that is the moment of genius", so Buffon, the French biologist. In the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" Shelley writes

Sudden, thy shadow fell on me  
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy

In Chopin, according to George Sand, who knew him intimately, "creation was spontaneous, miraculous—it would come sudden, sublime."

Thinkers, artists, and scientists have all described the sense of precision and inevitability, the loss of freedom of choice, or feeling of possession by an impersonal force which accompanies the creative moment. Blake declares, "I have written the poem without premeditation, and even against my will," and Jacob Boehme, the German mystic of the early seventeenth century, says "Before God I do not know how the thing arises in me, without the participation of my will. I do not even

know that which I must write " Van Gogh describes how he had "a terrible lucidity at moments, when nature is so glorious In those days, I am hardly conscious of myself and the picture comes to me like a dream " Walt Whitman says that the ' fruition of beauty is no chance of hit or miss—it is as inevitable as life—it is as exact and plumb as gravitation " Russel Wallace, who published the theory of natural selection simultaneously with Darwin, expresses the views of many thinkers in saying, "Ideas and beliefs are not voluntary acts "

Moreover the new ideas come before they can be justified or applied Thus Bernard Shaw's Joan of Arc says, "The voices come first, and I find the reasons after " This feature is most remarkable in the realm of science and of mathematics Sir Isaac Newton wrote of a geometrical theorem " It is plain to me by the fountain I draw it from, though I will not undertake to prove it to others " Like most intuitive mathematicians, he usually got the result before he could prove it, indeed one discovery of his (on the roots of equations) was only proved two hundred years later Gauss says of one of his mathematical discoveries

At last I succeeded not by painful effort, but so to speak by the grace of God As a sudden flash of truth the enigma was solved For my part I am not in a position to point to the thread which joins what I knew previously to what I have succeeded in doing

In the field of applied mathematics intuitive guessing sometimes proves superior to ordinary calculation Edison says

In all the work connected with the building of the first Central Station, the greatest bugbears I had to contend with were the mathematicians I found after a while that I could guess a good deal closer than they could figure, so I went on guessing.

A similar example is to be found in the design of complex electric valves, where practical, intuitive knowledge has played a major role, and one of the best living valve engineers is said to use only the multiplication table! The genius of many great experimenters, such as Faraday and Rutherford, lay in an exceptionally powerful intuition resulting from a passionate and sustained interest in a definite field of inquiry

### 3

Owing to the heightened interest in psychology many studies of creative thought have been made recently, and the majority of these trace the creative element to the unconscious in the individual mind This interpretation is supported by the recorded views of many creative person-

alities Schiller held that "poetry sets out from the unconscious," and since the middle of the nineteenth century countless others have ascribed their inspiration to the working of the unconscious. But this must not be interpreted in a one-sided manner, for all thought depends on the co-operation of conscious and unconscious. The supreme type of creative thought, in certain realms at least, appears to depend on an intimate blending of unconscious and conscious processes, when both work in harmony.

A few writers, disliking the conception of the unconscious, have held that all true mental work is conscious, that new ideas arise by the chance association of previously formed ideas, and that "inspiration" is a romantic fiction. But this view is scarcely tenable, for an important part of all mental activity takes place behind the scenes. The working of memory and association normally lies outside the field of conscious attention, and it is only their results which flash into our awareness.

Graham Wallas, an English sociologist, divided the process of creative thought into four stages: conscious *Preparation*, unconscious *Incubation*, the flash of *Illumination*, and the conscious *Verification* (or application). There is as yet no accepted psychological or physiological theory of the operations of the unconscious which lead to the creation of new patterns during the period of incubation, perhaps because the sharp separation of "physical" and "mental" processes in our dualistic language has delayed the advance of a science of thought. But it seems clear that no mere rearrangement of unchanged elements can account for what happens in the unconscious creative processes. The conscious mind performs such mechanical rearrangements all the time. But the creative imagination does more: it actually changes the character of the separate elements given to it, in course of molding them into a new unity.

Hadamard, a French mathematician now in the United States, suggests that mathematical invention is choice guided by the aesthetic sense. That is not wide enough to cover all creation, which sometimes involves not merely choice, but in addition the molding of the elements so that they can combine to form a new whole. The coalescence, or growing together, of elements into a new unit may change them. This creative reshaping is evident in all branches of culture. The new unity grows out of the old and is as different from the elements that were used to make it as the living organism is from the foodstuffs which it absorbs and assimilates. Indeed the creative processes of the mind share many features with the synthetic processes which occur throughout all living organisms.

It is therefore natural that the analogy of growth has often been used for creative thought. Keats liked the symbol of plant growth: "Let us open our leaves like a flower and be passive and receptive—budding patiently under the eye of Apollo." Tchaikovsky speaks of the

germ of a future composition [coming] suddenly If the soil is ready it takes root with extraordinary force and rapidity, shoots up through the earth puts forth branches leaves, and finally blossoms I cannot describe the creative process in any other way than by this simile

But growth requires a seed, and the heart of the creative process lies in the production of the original fertile nucleus from which growth can proceed This initial step in all creation consists in the establishment of a new unity from disparate elements, of order out of disorder, of shape from what was formless The mind achieves this by the plastic reshaping, so as to form a new unit, of a selection of the separate elements derived from experience and stored in memory Intuitions arise from richly unified experience Henry James spoke of the "deep well of unconscious cerebration," and Coleridge of the 'inward creatrix' which "establishes a center, as it were, a sort of nucleus in this reservoir of the soul"

Professor Lowes, in *The Road to Xanadu*, a superb study of the ways of the poetic imagination, speaks of the 'incredible facility with which in the wonder working depths of the unconscious the fragments which sink incessantly below the surface fuse and assimilate and coalesce'

This process of the establishment of new forms must occur in patterns of nervous activity in the brain, lying below the threshold of consciousness, which interact and combine to form more comprehensive patterns Experimental physiology has not yet identified this process, for its methods are as yet insufficiently refined, but it may be significant that a quarter of the total bodily consumption of energy during sleep goes to the brain, even when the sense organs are at rest, to maintain the activity of ten thousand million brain cells These cells, acting together as a single organ, achieve the miracle of the production of new patterns of thought No calculating machine can do that, for such machines can "only do what we know how to design them to do," and these formative brain processes obey laws which are still unknown

#### 4

Can any practical conclusions be drawn from the experience of genius? Is there an art of thought for the ordinary person? Certainly there is no single road to success, in the world of the imagination each has to find his own way to use his own gifts Yet a study of those who have been successful suggests some elementary hints towards a hygiene of the unconscious mind

A wide range of interests is an advantage, since valuable clues may be drawn from unexpected fields High specialism may lead to sterility

When a particular task makes no progress, one can go on with some-

thing else and return to the first later on. It may pay to keep several jobs running in parallel.

Periods of relaxation are important, such as an hour or two alone, when no definite task is undertaken and the time is kept free for pondering over anything that comes into one's mind.

Finally, the less haste the better. New ideas come less easily when the mind is strained by anxiety or tense with impatience to achieve a definite result. The new grows at its own pace—"as inevitable as life."

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Explain some of the ways in which ideas have come to creative thinkers and what the source of these ideas is assumed to be.
- 2 What are the most striking features of creative activity of the kind Whyte describes?
- 3 What, according to Whyte, does the creative imagination do that the conscious mind does not do?
- 4 By what means does the "process of the establishment of new forms" apparently take place?
- 5 What hints does Whyte give for behavior that will provide a good atmosphere for creative thought?
- 6 What is the effect of dividing the essay into four parts? Is the device a good one?
- 7 What does the author accomplish in each of the four parts?
- 8 Comment on the paragraph construction in Part 4. Compare it with that of other paragraphs in this essay and determine the relative effect of each on the reader.
- 9 What does Whyte accomplish by his frequent use of quotations?
- 10 Notice the organization of Part 1. What is the function of the first three paragraphs? the next three? the last one?
- 11 Trace the way in which Part 2 is organized around the first sentence. How many "distinctive features" does Whyte discuss?
- 12 How does Whyte use the analogy of growth in Part 3 to help make clear certain aspects of the creative process?
- 13 How much of this essay is made up of general ideas and how much of illustrations of these ideas? What conclusions would you draw as to the amount of specific material necessary to communicate ideas to a general audience?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Does the article provide anything that may be useful to the average person—or is it merely some interesting anecdotes about geniuses? Explain.
- 2 Does it help to say that creative ideas come from "intuition"—"the unconscious"—and so on? When such terms are used are we merely begging the question or do they have some useful meaning even though they aren't perfectly clear?



- 3 Have you ever had an important problem to solve? If so, how did you reach a solution?
- 4 Is the principle of keeping several tasks going at once a useful one for you?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 The hardest problem I ever solved
- 2 The value of being lazy
- 3 How I solved a problem—and how I would go about it the next time
- 4 Thinking is hard work.

## THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

(1825-1895), biologist, teacher, and writer, was an influential figure in English intellectual life. He was a strong defender of Darwin and spoke and wrote widely on philosophy and religion. Among his most important works are *Man's Place in Nature*, *The Physical Basis of Life, Science and Morals*, and *Ethics and Evolution*. [Reprinted from *Darwiniana*, 1893, by permission of Appleton Century Crofts Inc.]

### *The Method of Scientific Investigation*

The method of scientific investigation is nothing but the expression of the necessary mode of working of the human mind. It is simply the mode at which all phenomena are reasoned about, rendered precise and exact. There is no more difference, but there is just the same kind of difference, between the mental operations of a man of science and those of an ordinary person, as there is between the operations and methods of a baker or of a butcher weighing out his goods in common scales, and the operations of a chemist in performing a difficult and complex analysis by means of his balance and finely graduated scales. It is not that the action of the scales in the one case, and the balance in the other, differ in the principles of their construction or manner of working, but the beam of one is set on an infinitely finer axis than the other, and of course turns by the addition of a much smaller weight.

You will understand this better, perhaps, if I give you some familiar example. You have all heard it repeated, I dare say, that men of science work by means of induction and deduction, and that by the help of these operations, they, in a sort of sense, wring from Nature certain other things, which are called natural laws, and causes, and that out of these, by some cunning skill of their own, they build up hypotheses and theories.

And it is imagined by many, that the operations of the common mind can be by no means compared with these processes, and that they have to be acquired by a sort of special apprenticeship to the craft. To hear all these large words, you would think that the mind of a man of science must be constituted differently from that of his fellow men, but if you will not be frightened by terms, you will discover that you are quite wrong, and that all these terrible apparatus are being used by yourselves every day and every hour of your lives.

There is a well-known incident in one of Molière's plays, where the author makes the hero express unbounded delight on being told that he had been talking prose during the whole of his life. In the same way, I trust, that you will take comfort, and be delighted with yourselves, on the discovery that you have been acting on the principles of inductive and deductive philosophy during the same period. Probably there is not one here who has not in the course of the day had occasion to set in motion a complex train of reasoning, of the very same kind, though different of course in degree, as that which a scientific man goes through in tracing the causes of natural phenomena.

A very trivial circumstance will serve to exemplify this. Suppose you go into a fruiterer's shop, wanting an apple,—you take up one, and, on biting it, you find it is sour, you look at it, and see that it is hard and green. You take up another one, and that too is hard, green, and sour. The shopman offers you a third, but, before biting it, you examine it, and find that it is hard and green, and you immediately say that you will not have it, as it must be sour, like those that you have already tried.

Nothing can be more simple than that, you think, but if you will take the trouble to analyze and trace out into its logical elements what has been done by the mind, you will be greatly surprised. In the first place, you have performed the operation of induction. You found that, in two experiences, hardness and greenness in apples went together with sourness. It was so in the first case, and it was confirmed by the second. True, it is a very small basis, but still it is enough to make an induction from, you generalize the facts, and you expect to find sourness in apples where you get hardness and greenness. You found upon that a general law, that all hard and green apples are sour, and that, so far as it goes, is a perfect induction. Well, having got your natural law in this way, when you are offered another apple which you find is hard and green, you say, "All hard and green apples are sour, this apple is hard and green, therefore this apple is sour." That train of reasoning is what logicians call a syllogism, and has all its various parts and terms,—its major premise, its minor premise, and its conclusion, and, by the help of further reasoning, which, if drawn out, would have to be exhibited in two or three other syllogisms, you arrive at your final determination, "I will not have that

apple " So that, you see, you have, in the first place, established a law by induction, and upon that you have founded a deduction, and reasoned out the special conclusion of the particular case Well now, suppose, having got your law, that at some time afterwards, you are discussing the qualities of apples with a friend you will say to him, "It is a very curious thing,—but I find that all hard and green apples are sour!" Your friend says to you, "But how do you know that?" You at once reply, "Oh, because I have tried them over and over again, and have always found them to be so " Well, if we were talking science instead of common sense, we should call that an experimental verification And, if still opposed, you go further, and say, "I have heard from the people in Somersetshire and Devonshire, where a large number of apples are grown, that they have observed the same thing It is also found to be the case in Normandy, and in North America In short, I find it to be the universal experience of mankind wherever attention has been directed to the subject." Whereupon, your friend, unless he is a very unreasonable man, agrees with you, and is convinced that you are quite right in the conclusion you have drawn He believes, although perhaps he does not know he believes it, that the more extensive verifications are,—that the more frequently experiments have been made, and results of the same kind arrived at,—that the more varied the conditions under which the same results are obtained the more certain is the ultimate conclusion, and he disputes the question no further He sees that the experiment has been tried under all sorts of conditions, as to time, place, and people, with the same result, and he says with you, therefore, that the law you have laid down must be a good one, and he must believe it.

In science we do the same thing,—the philosopher exercises precisely the same faculties, though in a much more delicate manner In scientific inquiry it becomes a matter of duty to expose a supposed law to every possible kind of verification, and to take care, moreover, that this is done intentionally, and not left to a mere accident, as in the case of the apples And in science, as in common life, our confidence in a law is in exact proportion to the absence of variation in the result of our experimental verifications For instance, if you let go your grasp of an article you may have in your hand, it will immediately fall to the ground That is a very common verification of one of the best established laws of nature—that of gravitation The method by which men of science establish the existence of that law is exactly the same as that by which we have established the trivial proposition about the sourness of hard and green apples But we believe it in such an extensive, thorough, and unhesitating manner because the universal experience of mankind verifies it, and we can verify it ourselves at any time, and that is the strongest possible foundation on which any natural law can rest

So much, then, by way of proof that the method of establishing laws in science is exactly the same as that pursued in common life. Let us now turn to another matter (though really it is but another phase of the same question), and that is, the method by which, from the relations of certain phenomena, we prove that some stand in the position of causes towards the others.

I want to put the case clearly before you, and will therefore show you what I mean by another familiar example. I will suppose that one of you, on coming down in the morning to the parlor of your house, finds that a *tea pot* and some spoons which had been left in the room on the previous evening are gone,—the window is open, and you observe the mark of a dirty hand on the window-frame, and perhaps, in addition to that, you notice the impress of a hob-nailed shoe on the gravel outside. All these phenomena have struck your attention instantly, and before two seconds have passed you say, ‘Oh, somebody has broken open the window, entered the room, and run off with the spoons and the tea-pot!’ That speech is out of your mouth in a moment. And you will probably add, “I know there has, I am quite sure of it!” You mean to say exactly what you know, but in reality you are giving expression to what is, in all essential particulars, an hypothesis. You do not *know* it at all, it is nothing but an hypothesis rapidly framed in your own mind. And it is an hypothesis founded on a long train of inductions and deductions.

What are those inductions and deductions, and how have you got at this hypothesis? You have observed, in the first place, that the window is open, but by a train of reasoning involving many inductions and deductions, you have probably arrived long before at the general law—and a very good one it is—that windows do not open of themselves, and you therefore conclude that something has opened the window. A second general law that you have arrived at in the same way is, that tea pots and spoons do not go out of a window spontaneously, and you are satisfied that, as they are not now where you left them, they have been removed. In the third place, you look at the marks on the window sill, and the shoe marks outside, and you say that in all previous experience the former kind of mark has never been produced by *anything else but the* hand of a human being, and the same experience shows that no other animal but man at present wears shoes with hob-nails in them such as would produce the marks in the gravel. I do not know, even if we could discover any of those “*missing links*” that are talked about, that they would help us to any other conclusion! At any rate the law which states our present experience is strong enough for my present purpose. You next reach the conclusion that, as these kinds of marks have not been left by any other animal than man, or are liable to be formed in any other way than by a man’s hand and shoe, the marks in question have been

formed by a man in that way You have, further, a general law, founded on observation and experience, and that, too, is, I am sorry to say, a very universal and unimpeachable one,—that some men are thieves, and you assume at once from all these premises—and that is what constitutes your hypothesis—that the man who made the marks outside and on the window-sill, opened the window, got into the room, and stole your tea-pot and spoons You have now arrived at a *vera causa*,—you have assumed a cause which, it is plain, is competent to produce all the phenomena you have observed You can explain all these phenomena only by the hypothesis of a thief. But that is an hypothetical conclusion, of the justice of which you have no absolute proof at all, it is only rendered highly probable by a series of inductive and deductive reasonings

I suppose your first action, assuming that you are a man of ordinary common sense, and that you have established this hypothesis to your own satisfaction, will very likely be to go off for the police, and set them on the track of the burglar, with the view to the recovery of your property But just as you are starting with this object, some person comes in, and on learning what you are about, says, "My good friend, you are going on a great deal too fast. How do you know that the man who really made the marks took the spoons? It might have been a monkey that took them, and the man may have merely looked in afterwards " You would probably reply, "Well, that is all very well, but you see it is contrary to all experience of the way tea pots and spoons are abstracted, so that, at any rate, your hypothesis is less probable than mine " While you are talking the thing over in this way, another friend arrives, one of the good kind of people that I was talking of a little while ago And he might say, "Oh, my dear sir, you are certainly going on a great deal too fast You are most presumptuous You admit that all these occurrences took place when you were fast asleep, at a time when you could not possibly have known anything about what was taking place How do you know that the laws of Nature are not suspended during the night? It may be that there has been some kind of supernatural interference in this case " In point of fact, he declares that your hypothesis is one of which you cannot at all demonstrate the truth, and that you are by no means sure that the laws of Nature are the same when you are asleep as when you are awake

Well, now, you cannot at the moment answer that kind of reasoning You feel that your worthy friend has you somewhat at a disadvantage You will feel perfectly convinced in your own mind, however, that you are quite right, and you say to him, " My good friend, I can only be guided by the natural probabilities of the case, and if you will be kind enough to stand aside and permit me to pass, I will go and fetch the police " Well, we will suppose that your journey is successful, and that by good luck you

meet with a policeman, that eventually the burglar is found with your property on his person, and the marks correspond to his hand and to his boots. Probably any jury would consider those facts a very good experimental verification of your hypothesis, touching the cause of the abnormal phenomena observed in your parlor, and would act accordingly.

Now, in this supposititious case, I have taken phenomena of a very common kind, in order that you might see what are the different steps in an ordinary process of reasoning if you will only take the trouble to analyze it carefully. All the operations I have described, you will see, are involved in the mind of any man of sense in leading him to a conclusion as to the course he should take in order to make good a robbery and punish the offender. I say that you are led, in that case, to your conclusion by exactly the same train of reasoning as that which a man of science pursues when he is endeavoring to discover the origin and laws of the most occult phenomena. The process is and always must be, the same, and precisely the same mode of reasoning was employed by Newton and Laplace in their endeavors to discover and define the causes of the movements of the heavenly bodies as you with your own common sense, would employ to detect a burglar. The only difference is that the nature of the inquiry being more abstruse, every step has to be most carefully watched so that there may not be a single crack or flaw in your hypothesis. A flaw or crack in many of the hypotheses of daily life may be of little or no moment as affecting the general correctness of the conclusions at which we may arrive, but in a scientific inquiry, a fallacy, great or small is all ways of importance, and is sure to be in the long run constantly productive of mischievous if not fatal results.

Do not allow yourself to be misled by the common notion that an hypothesis is untrustworthy simply because it is an hypothesis. It is often urged, in respect to some scientific conclusion that, after all it is only an hypothesis. But what more have we to guide us in nine tenths of the most important affairs of daily life than hypotheses and often very ill based ones? So that in science where the evidence of an hypothesis is subjected to the most rigid examination we may rightly pursue the same course. You may have hypotheses and hypotheses. A man may say if he likes, that the moon is made of green cheese that is an hypothesis. But another man who has devoted a great deal of time and attention to the subject and availed himself of the most powerful telescopes and the results of the observations of others declares that in his opinion it is probably composed of materials very similar to those of which our own earth is made up and that is also only an hypothesis. But I need not tell you that there is an enormous difference in the value of the two hypotheses. That one which is based on sound scientific knowledge is sure to

have a corresponding value, and that which is a mere hasty random guess is likely to have but little value. Every great step in our progress in discovering causes has been made in exactly the same way as that which I have detailed to you. A person observing the occurrence of certain facts and phenomena asks, naturally enough, what process, what kind of operation known to occur in Nature, applied to the particular case, will unravel and explain the mystery? Hence you have the scientific hypothesis, and its value will be proportionate to the care and completeness with which its basis had been tested and verified. It is in these matters as in the commonest affairs of practical life: the guess of the fool will be folly, while the guess of the wise man will contain wisdom. In all cases, you see that the value of the result depends on the patience and faithfulness with which the investigator applies to his hypothesis every possible kind of verification.

Wherever there are complex masses of phenomena to be inquired into, whether they be phenomena of the affairs of daily life, or whether they belong to the more abstruse and difficult problems laid before the philosopher, our course of proceeding in unravelling that complex chain of phenomena with a view to get at its cause, is always the same, in all cases we must invent an hypothesis, we must place before ourselves some more or less likely supposition respecting that cause, and then, having assumed an hypothesis, having supposed a cause for the phenomena in question, we must endeavor, on the one hand, to demonstrate our hypothesis, or, on the other, to upset and reject it altogether, by testing it in three ways. We must, in the first place, be prepared to prove that the supposed causes of the phenomena exist in nature, that they are what the logicians call *veræ causæ*—true causes, in the next place, we should be prepared to show that the assumed causes of the phenomena are competent to produce such as those we wish to explain by them, and in the last place, we ought to be able to show that no other known causes are competent to produce these phenomena. If we can succeed in satisfying these three conditions, we shall have demonstrated our hypothesis, or rather I ought to say, we shall have proved it as far as certainty is possible for us, for, after all, there is no one of our surest convictions which may not be upset, or at any rate modified by a further accession of knowledge. It was because it satisfied these conditions that we accepted the hypothesis as to the disappearance of the tea pot and spoons in the case I supposed, we found that our hypothesis on that subject was tenable and valid, because the supposed cause existed in nature, because it was competent to account for the phenomena, and because no other known cause was competent to account for them, and it is upon similar grounds that any hypothesis you choose to name is accepted in science as tenable and valid.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Explain the process of induction. How does it differ from deduction?
- 2 Explain the meaning and importance of "experimental verification" in thinking.
- 3 What is an hypothesis?
- 4 How should the validity of any hypothesis be tested?
- 5 What is the relationship between the method of scientific investigation and ordinary good thinking?
- 6 What principal means does Huxley use to make his ideas clear?
- 7 Find a paragraph which is clearly intended to form a transition between two principal parts of the essay. Analyze this paragraph to determine how the transition is accomplished.
- 8 What is the function of the last three paragraphs?
- 9 Comment on Huxley's introduction of his subject. Do you find it effective?
- 10 How would you characterize Huxley's style of writing? Why does he write as he does?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 If scientific investigation is as much like ordinary thinking as Huxley suggests, why do human beings make so many mistakes in their thinking?
- 2 What do you find to be the chief obstacles to clear thinking—your own and other people's?
- 3 How should a college student study and attempt to improve his thinking processes?
- 4 Are there any areas of human life in which scientific investigation is inappropriate?
- 5 Should a person ever base a course of action on an unverified hypothesis? Explain.

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 A time to think and a time to act.
- 2 Education should help one learn to think scientifically.
- 3 Some unverified hypotheses.
- 4 Everyone should be more scientific.
- 5 A great scientific discovery and how it was made.



## MARCHETTE CHUTE

born 1909 *Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts* has written three outstanding biographies Geoffrey Chaucer of England, Shakespeare of London, and Ben Jonson of Westminster [From *The Saturday Review*, September 19 1953, reprinted by permission of the author]

### *Getting at the Truth*

This is a rather presumptuous title for a biographer to use, since truth is a very large word. In the sense that it means the reality about a human being it is probably impossible for a biographer to achieve. In the sense that it means a reasonable presentation of all the available facts it is more nearly possible, but even this limited goal is harder to reach than it appears to be. A biographer needs to be both humble and cautious when he remembers the nature of the material he is working with, for a historical fact is rather like the flamingo that Alice in Wonderland tried to use as a croquet mallet. As soon as she got its neck nicely straightened out and was ready to hit the ball, it would turn and look at her with a puzzled expression, and any biographer knows that what is called a "fact" has a way of doing the same.

Here is a small example. When I was writing my forthcoming biography, 'Ben Jonson of Westminster,' I wanted to give a paragraph or two to Sir Philip Sidney, who had a great influence on Jonson. No one thinks of Sidney without thinking of chivalry, and to underline the point I intended to use a story that Sir Fulke Greville told of him. Sidney died of gangrene, from a musket shot that shattered his thigh, and Greville says that Sidney failed to put on his leg armor while preparing for battle because the marshal of the camp was not wearing leg armor and Sidney was unwilling to do anything that would give him a special advantage.

The story is so characteristic both of Sidney himself and of the misplaced high-mindedness of late Renaissance chivalry that I wanted to use it, and since Sir Fulke Greville was one of Sidney's closest friends the information seemed to be reliable enough. But it is always well to check each piece of information as thoroughly as possible and so I consulted another account of Sidney written by a contemporary, this time a doctor who knew the family fairly well. The doctor, Thomas Moffet, mentioned the episode but he said that Sidney left off his leg armor because he was in a hurry.

The information was beginning to twist in my hand and could no longer be trusted. So I consulted still another contemporary who had mentioned the episode, to see which of the two he agreed with. This was Sir John

Smythe, a military expert who brought out his book a few years after Sidney's death. Sir John was an old-fashioned conservative who advocated the use of heavy armor even on horseback, and he deplored the current craze for leaving off leg protection, 'the imitating of which cost that noble and worthy gentleman Sir Philip Sidney his life.'

So here I was with three entirely different reasons why Sidney left off his leg armor, all advanced by careful writers who were contemporaries of his. The flamingo had a legitimate reason for looking around with a puzzled expression.

The only thing to do in a case like this is to examine the point of view of the three men who are supplying the conflicting evidence. Sir Fulke Greville was trying to prove a thesis that his beloved friend had an extremely chivalric nature. Sir John Smythe also was trying to prove a thesis that the advocates of light arming followed a theory that could lead to disaster. Only the doctor, Thomas Moffet, was not trying to prove a thesis. He was not using his own explanation to reinforce some point he wanted to make. He did not want anything except to set down on paper what he believed to be the facts, and since we do not have Sidney's own explanation of why he did not put on leg armor, the chances are that Dr. Moffet is the safest man to trust.

For Moffet was without desire. Nothing can so quickly blur and distort the facts as desire—the wish to use the facts for some purpose of your own—and nothing can so surely destroy the truth. As soon as the witness wants to prove something he is no longer impartial and his evidence is no longer to be trusted.

The only safe way to study contemporary testimony is to bear constantly in mind this possibility of prejudice and to put almost as much attention on the writer himself as on what he has written. For instance, Sir Anthony Weldon's description of the Court of King James is lively enough and often used as source material, but a note from the publisher admits that the pamphlet was issued as a warning to anyone who wished to 'side with this bloody house of Stuart.' The publisher, at any rate, did not consider Weldon an impartial witness. At about the same time Arthur Wilson published his history of Great Britain, which contained an irresistibly vivid account of the agonized death of the Countess of Somerset. Wilson sounds reasonably impartial, but his patron was the Earl of Essex, who had good reason to hate that particular countess, and there is evidence that he invented the whole scene to gratify his patron.

Sometimes a writer will contradict what he has already written, and in that case the only thing to do is to investigate what has changed his point of view. For instance, in 1608 Captain John Smith issued a description of his capture by Powhatan, and he made it clear that the Indian chief had

treated him with unwavering courtesy and hospitality In 1624 the story was repeated in Smith's "General History of Virginia," but the writer's circumstances had changed Smith needed money, "having a prince's mind imprisoned in a poor man's purse," and, he wanted the book to be profitable Powhatan's daughter, the princess Pocahontas, had recently been in the news, for her visit to England had aroused a great deal of interest among the sort of people that Smith hoped would buy his book. So Smith supplied a new version of the story, in which the once-hospitable Powhatan would have permitted the hero's brains to be dashed out if Pocahontas had not saved his life It was the second story that achieved fame, and of course it may have been true But it is impossible to trust it because the desire of the writer is so obviously involved, as Smith said in his prospectus, he needed money and hoped that the book would give "satisfaction "

It might seem that there was an easy way for a biographer to avoid the use of this kind of prejudiced testimony All he has to do is to construct his biography from evidence that cannot be tampered with—from parish records, legal documents, bills, accounts, court records, and so on Out of these solid gray blocks of impersonal evidence it should surely be possible to construct a road that will lead straight to the truth and that will never bend itself to the misleading curve of personal desire

This might be so if the only problem involved were the reliability of the material But there is another kind of desire that is much more subtle, much more pervasive, and much more dangerous than the occasional distortions of fact that contemporary writers may have permitted themselves to make, and this kind of desire can destroy the truth of a biography even if every individual fact in it is as solid and as uncompromising as rock. Even if the road is built of the best and most reliable materials it can still curve away from the truth because of this other desire that threatens it the desire of the biographer himself

A biographer is not a court record or a legal document. He is a human being, writing about another human being, and his own temperament, his own point of view, and his own frame of reference are unconsciously imposed upon the man he is writing about. Even if the biographer is free from Captain Smith's temptation—the need for making money—and wants to write nothing but the literal truth, he is still handicapped by the fact that there is no such thing as a completely objective human being

An illustration of what can happen if the point of view is sufficiently strong is the curious conclusion that the nineteenth-century biographers reached about William Shakespeare Shakespeare joined a company of London actors in 1594, was listed as an actor in 1598 and 1603, and was still listed as one of the "men actors" in the company in 1609 Shortly before he joined this company Shakespeare dedicated two narrative poems

to the Earl of Southampton, and several years after Shakespeare died his collected plays were dedicated to the Earl of Pembroke. This was his only relationship with either of the two noblemen, and there is nothing to connect him with them during the fifteen years in which he belonged to the same acting company and during which he wrote nearly all his plays.

But here the desire of the biographers entered in. They had been reared in the strict code of nineteenth-century gentility and they accepted two ideas without question. One was that there are few things more important than an English lord, the other was that there are few things less important than a mere actor. They already knew the undeniable fact that Shakespeare was one of the greatest men who ever lived, and while they could not go quite so far as to claim him as an actual member of the nobility, it was clear to them that he must have been the treasured friend of both the Earl of Southampton and the Earl of Pembroke and that he must have written his plays either while basking in their exalted company or while he was roaming the green countryside by the waters of the river Avon. (It is another basic conviction of the English gentleman that there is nothing so inspiring as nature.) The notion that Shakespeare had spent all these years as the working member of a company of London actors was so abhorrent that it was never seriously considered. It could not be so, therefore it was not.

These biographers did their work well. When New South Wales built its beautiful memorial library to Shakespeare, it was the coat of arms of the Earl of Southampton that alternated with that of royalty in dignified splendor over the bookshelves. Shakespeare had been re-created in the image of desire, and desire will always ignore whatever is not relevant to its purpose. Because the English gentlemen did not like Shakespeare's background it was explained away as though it had never existed, and Shakespeare ceased to be an actor because so lowly a trade was not suited to so great a man.

All this is not to say that a biography should be lacking in a point of view. If it does not have a point of view it will be nothing more than a kind of expanded article for an encyclopedia—a string of facts arranged in chronological order with no claim to being a real biography at all. A biography must have a point of view and it must have a frame of reference. But it should be a point of view and a frame of reference implicit in the material itself and not imposed upon it.

It might seem that the ideal biographical system, if it could be achieved, would be to go through the years of research without feeling any kind of emotion. The biographer would be a kind of fact-finding machine and then suddenly, after his years of research, a kind of total vision would fall upon him and he would transcribe it in his best and

most persuasive English for a waiting public. But research is fortunately not done by machinery, nor are visions likely to descend in that helpful manner. They are the product not only of many facts but also of much thinking, and it is only when the biographer begins to get emotional in his thinking that he ought to beware.

It is easy enough to make good resolutions in advance, but a biographer cannot altogether control his sense of excitement when the climax of his years of research draws near and he begins to see the pieces fall into place. Almost without his volition, A, B, and D fit together and start to form a pattern, and it is almost impossible for the biographer not to start searching for C. Something turns up that looks remarkably like C, and with a little trimming of the edges and the ignoring of one very slight discrepancy it will fill the place allotted for C magnificently.

It is at this point that the biographer ought to take a deep breath and sit on his hands until he has had time to calm down. He has no real, fundamental reason to believe that his discovery is C, except for the fact that he wants it to be. He is like a man looking for a missing piece in a difficult jigsaw puzzle, who has found one so nearly the right shape that he cannot resist the desire to jam it into place.

If the biographer had refused to be tempted by his supposed discovery of C and had gone on with his research, he might have found not only the connecting, illuminating fact he needed but much more besides. He is not going to look for it now. Desire has blocked the way. And by so much his biography will fall short of what might have been the truth.

It would not be accurate to say that a biographer should be wholly lacking in desire. Curiosity is a form of desire. So is the final wish to get the material down on paper in a form that will be fair to the reader's interest and worthy of the subject. But a subconscious desire to push the facts around is one of the most dangerous things a biographer can encounter, and all the more dangerous because it is so difficult to know when he is encountering it.

The reason Alice had so much trouble with her flamingo is that the average flamingo does not wish to be used as a croquet mallet. It has other purposes in view. The same thing is true of a fact, which can be just as self-willed as a flamingo and has its own kind of stubborn integrity. To try to force a series of facts into a previously desired arrangement is a form of misuse to which no self-respecting fact will willingly submit itself. The best and only way to treat it is to leave it alone and be willing to follow where it leads, rather than to press your own wishes upon it.

To put the whole thing into a single sentence: you will never succeed in getting at the truth if you think you know, ahead of time, what the truth ought to be.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Why was Miss Chute justified in trusting Dr. Moffet's account of Sidney's failure to wear his leg armor, rather than the other two accounts? What principle is involved?
- 2 Explain Miss Chute's reasons for saying that the desire of the biographer can distort the truth even though his account of events is based on well-documented facts.
- 3 What is meant by the statement that a biography must have a point of view and a frame of reference implicit in the material itself and not imposed upon it?
- 4 In what two ways is a biographer prevented from getting at the truth when he forces a piece of evidence even very slightly in order to fit a pattern?
- 5 By what means does Chute make clear the dangers of *desire*?
- 6 Make an outline showing the principal divisions of this essay.
- 7 How does Chute use the comparison between a fact and the flamingo used as a croquet mallet as an organizing element in the essay?
- 8 How effective is the use of the hypothetical illustration employing A, B, and C instead of a set of actual facts?
- 9 Point out instances in which Chute states explicitly what her principal ideas are.
10. Discuss critically the effectiveness of the last paragraph.

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Why do umpires in athletic contests usually make it a principle not to reverse their decisions?
- 2 What dangers of misinterpretation would exist for a person who wanted to write a biography of one of his ancestors?
- 3 Name a newspaper columnist whose comments you generally read *with approval* and suggest reasons why he may be unconsciously distorting the truth.
- 4 Miss Chute concludes her article with the statement: "You will never succeed in getting at the truth if you think you know ahead of time what the truth ought to be." Name some fields in which special precautions are taken to be sure this principle is followed.

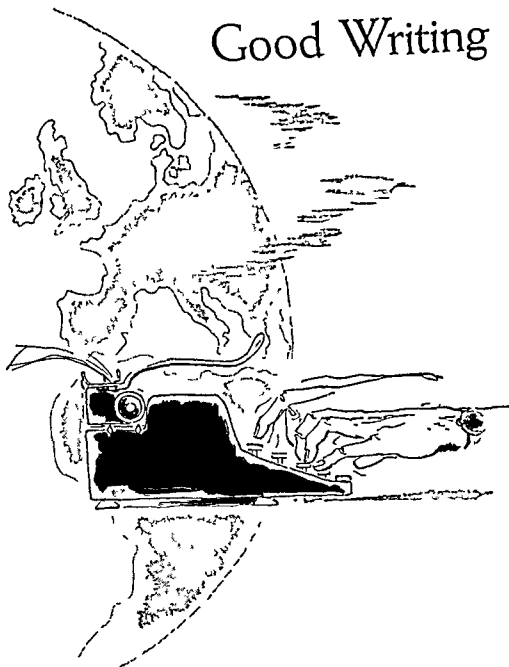
## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 What I found out when I checked a Sunday newspaper account of a historical event against standard reference works.
- 2 How statistical facts can support false conclusions.
- 3 An editorial that is misleading and the reasons why.
- 4 Should a lawyer defend a client he knows to be guilty?

## PART II: On *Language, Art, and Communication*

### Chapter Three

# Language and Good Writing



TRUE EASE IN WRITING  
COMES FROM ART, NOT CHANCE,  
AS THOSE MOVE EASIEST  
WHO HAVE LEARN'D TO DANCE

ALEXANDER POPE



# Introduction

Education depends almost exclusively on two symbolic systems of communication—language and mathematics. Of the two, language is by far the more general and basic. Without it thought can hardly proceed—or even exist. There is no field of human knowledge or endeavor represented in this book in which language does not have a special and vital role to play.

In the past century language has been scrutinized, reflected upon, and analyzed as never before. Philosophers, psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, medical men, educators, statisticians, businessmen, and people of searching mind in dozens of other fields have focused their lights on special problems of language in their own fields. In spite of the enormous amounts of study devoted to such problems, it is apparent that a great deal more remains to be done—that a little exploratory drilling has revealed the existence of an enormous mass of ore.

Alongside modern studies of the *nature* of language run the ancient but still vital and still expanding studies of the convincing and artistic *use* of language. In some ways the world is more concerned with new applications of the ancient art of effective communication, called rhetoric, than with researches into the origins and nature of language.

One main concern of the modern world is with effective communication by written language. The articles in this chapter have been chosen to throw a few shafts of light on that subject, and to illuminate it especially from angles of vision useful to the college student.

Louis M. Myers, who is Professor of English at Arizona State College at Tempe, in his article "Language, Logic, and Grammar" introduces you to the systematized knowledge of language in the fields of grammar and semantics—grammar being the study of forms of words and customary arrangements of words, and semantics being the study of meanings, and ways of avoiding confusion over meanings.

The second article was especially prepared for this book by the editors, who have given it the title "Danger Freshmen at Work." This article, intended to show in unmistakable clarity a central difficulty that beginning college writers have, is indebted for all its im-

portant ideas, as well as its specimen themes, to Professor Josephine Miles of the University of California at Berkeley. Her article "The Freshman at Composition," written for a professional audience, was adapted to the purposes of this book by the editors because it so obviously penetrated to the center of the problem of organizing short compositions.

The third and fourth articles in the chapter are full of instructive fun. Samuel T. Williamson, an experienced writer and editor for many years, in "How to Write like a Social Scientist" lands many well deserved whacks on writers of "gobbledegook"—his immediate target being professors of the social sciences—and concludes with an ironic set of rules for writing pretentious and confusing English.

William H. Whyte, Jr., one of the editors of *Fortune*, contributes in "The Language of Business" a perceptive, bantering survey of "businessese," that language within a language which has its own typical shortcomings and absurdities. In the second part of his article Mr. Whyte criticizes the cure-all of the "plain talk" movement, which he believes has many merits, but which he doubts is a wholly healthy remedy for ailments of writing.

These four articles are full of good principles for one's own use of language in writing, and the chapter as a whole has particular connections with many of the ideas expressed in the sections entitled "Thinking Straight," "The Language of Literature," and "Mass Media of Communication." Some of these connections the reader may want to discover and explore for himself.

## LOUIS M. MYERS

born 1901 is Professor of English and head of the Department of English at Arizona State College at Tempe [From *American English*, a Twentieth Century Grammar, Copyright 1952 by Prentice Hall Inc.]

### *Language, Logic, and Grammar*

A language may be defined roughly as consisting of a set of words and some habitual ways of putting them together. Dictionaries deal primarily with the individual words, grammars with characteristic forms and with ways of arranging words in coherent communications. There is inevitably some overlapping between the two.

#### WORD-FORM AND WORD-ORDER

In some languages the connections between words are shown largely by changes in form. Thus in Latin "Marcus vidit Quintum" and "Marcum vidit Quintus" mean quite different things, although the same three words are used in the same order. The first means that Marcus saw Quintus, the second, that Quintus saw Marcus. The endings in *-us* and *-um* show which is the subject and which is the object of the action, regardless of the order.

In some other languages, like Chinese, words never change their form. The meaning of a group of words therefore depends on the choice of words and the order in which they are arranged.

Originally, English was very much like Latin in this respect. Most words were *inflected*—that is, they had a number of forms that showed variations in their basic meanings, and indicated their relations to each other. Now most of these inflections have been lost, and the structure of the language has become more like that of Chinese. Even the endings that remain have lost most of their power to show distinctions. Look at the following sentences:

He and I saw it yesterday  
Him and me seen it yesterday

There are good reasons, which will be discussed later, for avoiding the second. But we understand it as readily as the first, and take it to mean the same thing. Our usual way of showing differences in meaning is by varying the *order* of words, as in the following sentences:

John hit Tom  
Tom hit John

On the other hand, there are times when changes in the forms of words make a considerable difference in the meaning

The man helps the boys  
The men helped the boy

A study of English grammar therefore involves both the forms and the order of words

### THE PROBLEM OF MEANING

If we want to keep our feet on the ground while we are making such a study, we had better begin by trying to understand something about how words come to "mean" anything at all. If we simply take it for granted that they do and go on from there, we will never have any real understanding of the language, no matter how many grammatical rules we memorize.

Let us suppose that on an uninhabited island a freak rock formation has resulted in the white streaks on a cliff forming the letters P A I N. This would mean absolutely nothing to the animals, the trees, or the rocks themselves. It would still mean nothing if an illiterate savage landed on the island and looked at it. But if an American landed, the letters would look to him like a familiar word, and would call up reactions connected with earlier acquaintance with that word. For the first time the letters would suggest a meaning—"pain." This meaning would occur in the man's mind. The cliffs and the letters would be no more intelligent than before.

If a Frenchman landed on the island and noticed the same letters, an entirely different meaning would be suggested, since it happens that in French the letters P A I N also form a word—but the word means "bread," and not an uncomfortable sensation.

Most of us probably have a feeling that the letters must somehow mean something all by themselves, even if there is nobody there to appreciate them, but it is hard to see how they could mean two such different things as "pain" and "bread." If we think the matter over, we are forced to agree that meaning is the product of human nervous systems, and does not reside in the letters on the cliff.

The next question that comes up is, would the letters on the cliff have a meaning of their own if they had been deliberately written to form a word? Suppose the American had written down the sentence, "I have a *pain* in my back," and had then torn up the paper so that one

piece contained just the word "pain." If the Frenchman happened to pick that piece up, it would suggest to him the idea "bread." Would the word "really" mean what the American intended to convey, or what it happened to suggest to the Frenchman?

### THREE KINDS OF MEANING

We could argue this point forever without getting anywhere, for the fact is that we use the words *mean* and *meaning* in a number of different ways; and if we don't keep at least three of these carefully separated in our minds, we can become badly confused.

*Meaning* (1) What the speaker intends to indicate

*Meaning* (2) What is suggested to a particular listener

*Meaning* (3) A more or less general habit of using a given word to indicate a given thing

A good many writers on the language neglect the first two of these and treat the third far too rigidly, as if the connection between the word and the thing were absolute, instead of a never-quite uniform habit. You have probably heard such statements as "Buffalo does not mean the American bison, but an entirely different animal", or "Penny really means an English coin—the American coin is a *cent*."

This is putting the cart before the horse. We can discover meaning (3)—often referred to as the "real" meaning—only by observing the occurrences of meanings (1) and (2). To deny that these meanings are real is as unreasonable as it would be to deny the reality of a family of two or eleven on the grounds that the "average" family consists of five. It is quite true that the English used the word *penny* for one kind of coin before we used it for another. But it is equally true that the newer meaning is very common in America, and it is *not* true (in spite of what some dictionaries say) that this meaning is merely "colloquial." Even our most formal writers might say, "He had a *dime*, two *nickels*, and three *pennies*," though they would probably express the total by saying "twenty-three *cents*."

Of course we could not communicate at all without some sort of agreement that certain words are to be used to stand for certain things. Therefore meaning (3)—"a more or less general habit of using a given word to indicate a given thing"—is also perfectly legitimate. But we should not pretend that this more or less general habit is absolutely uniform, or that any number of books or teachers can ever make it so.

We can only guess how the habit started, and a number of very different guesses have been made. A linguist can trace the connection between English *father* and Latin *pater*, or between English *fish* and

Latin *piscis* but he cannot give a satisfactory reason why one of these pairs of words should be applied to male parents and the other to animals that live in the water. They would work exactly as well if their meanings were reversed. This last point is important. The "agreement" to use certain words for certain things is basically arbitrary. It is also, in the main, informal, habitual, and unenforceable.

### WHY COMMUNICATION IS NEVER PERFECT

We cannot understand each other unless we approximate the habits of those with whom we communicate, but we can only approximate. Until we find two people with identical physical equipment, nervous systems, and backgrounds of past experience, we cannot expect to find even two people who use a language in exactly the same way. Schools and other forces tend to keep our language habits somewhat similar, but perfect uniformity is not even theoretically possible. This is true of both individual words and of ways of putting them together. Moreover, it is true of the ways we react to language as well as of the ways we express it.

Let us look at a single short sentence.

John hurt Mary

Most of us would say offhand that we understand this perfectly. Yet it conveys, by itself, very little definite information, as we can see by trying to answer the following questions: Are John and Mary people, pigs, or one of each? Are they real or imaginary? Was the hurting mental, physical or what?

Suppose that as I wrote the sentence I was thinking of one pig biting another, that Jim Smith, as he reads it, gets the impression of one child scratching and kicking another, and that Sally Jones builds up the picture of a love affair marked by deep spiritual suffering. Each of these "meanings" is perfectly legitimate, but unless we can somehow get closer together, our communication will not be very successful. From the *words themselves* we get only the following information:

- (1) *John* is presumably male and animate, and there is some probability that he is human. He may be either real or imaginary.
- (2) *Mary* is presumably female. Her other possibilities are parallel to John's.
- (3) *Hurt* indicates some sort of action with an unpleasant effect that has already occurred.
- (4) The position of the words indicates that the direction of the action was from John to Mary.

Thus each word, by itself, *limits the possibilities* a good deal, and the relative position of the words limits them still further. The question is,

can we limit them enough to communicate our ideas accurately and effectively?

We can make some progress in this direction by using additional words. Suppose I expand the sentence to read "My little black pig John, hurt my little white pig, Mary, by biting her in the left ear." This answers two of the questions listed above—John and Mary are pigs rather than people, and the hurting was physical. The reader may even accept the fact that the pigs are real rather than imaginary, although this cannot be proved by words alone. But other questions remain—how big is *little*, how much it hurt, and so forth. No matter how many words we use, or how carefully we arrange them, we can never directly transfer an idea from one mind to another. We can only hope to stimulate in the second mind an idea *similar* to that in the first. The words pass through our minds. The pigs, we hope, stay in their pens. And the exact nature of the connection between the words, the minds, and the pigs is not the easiest thing in the world to explain. At the very least we have to consider

(1) The relation between the words and the minds of the people who use them

(2) The relation between the words and the things and activities they stand for

(3) The relations of the words to each other

It is with the last of these that we are particularly concerned in this book, but we cannot discuss it intelligently without briefly considering the other two, because without them it would be as meaningless as the letters P A I N on the cliff.

## WORDS AND THE HUMAN NERVOUS SYSTEM

The human brain operates something like an electronic computing machine. It contains millions of short nerve-lengths comparable to wires, and millions of nerve connections comparable to switches. The workings of this complex system are not fully understood, but we do know that electrical impulses pass through it at a very regular speed of about four hundred feet per second. It is the passage of these impulses that constitutes our thinking.

Even the simplest thought requires the passage of a current over a complicated circuit containing innumerable switches. When an impulse starts, it might follow any one of an enormous number of routes, depending on how the switches click. But once a route has been selected, there is some tendency for the switches to set, so that a second impulse starting from the same point as the first can more easily duplicate the route than pick out a new one of its own. It is by this setting of the

switches that memory and habits develop. It may take a number of repetitions to have a significant effect.

A switch may be set so firmly that a possible connection is blocked out temporarily, or even permanently. For instance, most of us have had the experience of doing a complicated problem of arithmetic, in the midst of which we have made a very obvious mistake, such as multiplying two by two and getting two as the result. We have then checked it over several times without finding the error—two times two still seems to give us two. One of our switches has temporarily been jammed in the wrong position. Fortunately, not every passage of a nerve impulse jams a switch; it merely makes it easier for it to turn one way than another.

There are always a number of impulses passing through different circuits, and these affect each other. The way we think at a given time is therefore determined largely by our previous experiences—not only the things we have encountered, but the particular paths that our nerve impulses have followed as a result of encountering them. No two of us started out with exactly the same wiring system, and the original differences have been increased by later activity.

The explanation just given is greatly oversimplified, but perhaps it will help us to understand something about the way we use words. Early in life we learn to associate words with people, things, events, and relations. Words as such are not permanently stored in the brain like cards in a filing cabinet. When a man hears or sees a word he receives an impulse which must pass along some circuit, determined by his previous experience with both words and things. When he hears it again, the new impulse tends to follow approximately the same circuit, unless some intervening experience modifies it. On the other hand, when some other stimulus sends an impulse along part of the same circuit, he "remembers" the word. Meanwhile it, as a word, has completely disappeared from his mind. But the effect it has had on his nervous system, by operating some of the switches, persists. Consequently, if he has associated the word with a given situation, the recurrence of some aspect of that situation, either in physical fact or in mental review, is likely to reactivate the circuit, and he is again conscious of the word.

For instance, I look into a pen and see one animal bite another, and hear the second one squeal. I would not say anything, even to myself, unless I was to some extent interested in the activity. But if I was interested enough to notice it, part of the reaction of noticing would probably be the passing of words through my mind. The particular words that passed would be determined by my previous experiences. If I had seen animals before, I might say "One pig bit the other," or "One pig



hurt the other," depending on whether I was more impressed by the action or its effect. If they were my own animals I would probably think of them as individuals rather than simply as pigs, and might therefore say, "John hurt Mary."

Simple as this sentence is, I could not possibly have said it without having had a number of past experiences—enough to guess at the probable effect of John's teeth on Mary's ear and nervous system, and the significance of her squeal. Not being, myself, a small female pig, I must base my guess on a whole chain of assumptions, but I can be reasonably confident of its accuracy.

Certain events in the outside world have made impressions on my nervous system. I have associated words with these impressions, and not directly with the events themselves. If I attempt to communicate by the use of words, I must try to arouse *similar impressions in the nervous system* of the man I am talking to. Similar, not identical. His own past experiences, which cannot possibly be exactly the same as mine, are bound to affect his reactions. Even if he realizes that I am talking about my two pigs, his internal response may be quite surprising. I am expecting him to feel something like "Isn't that too bad?" but his actual sentiments may be "So what?" or even "Three cheers for John!"

We may be tempted to say "Oh, he understands, all right. He just reacts differently." But what we call his understanding is merely a part of his total reaction, and cannot be separated, except verbally, from the rest of it. If you don't believe this, try telling a mother some time "Oh, your boy is all right, he just broke a leg and a couple of ribs." The only thing she will understand from the word *just* is that you are an inhuman brute. As for the rest of the sentence, you have sent out a message saying "The damage to your son is temporary, so there is nothing to worry about." She has received one saying "My darling is suffering and there is no justice, and how do I know that one of his ribs hasn't punctured a lung?" And if you try to tell her that that is not a reasonable interpretation of your words, she will simply say (if she is still bothering to speak to you), "You have never been a mother." Her past experiences and her set of values are different from yours, especially where her son is concerned. Even if you had been more tactful in your report, your words could not possibly "mean" to her what they "mean" to you.

#### WORDS AND THINGS

The second relation—between words and the things they stand for—also needs some attention. We have already seen that the connection between a word and a thing is neither necessary nor direct. It is also important to realize that it is never quite the same twice, because the

We have already seen that any sentence can represent an indefinite number of situations. These sentences themselves do not overlap—no reasonable interpretation of any one of them could be applied to either of the others. Moreover, the general structure of the kind of situation to which each could refer is quite different, as we can see by analyzing the activity represented by each. In the first, the boy definitely did something to the dog. In the second, we say that the man did something to the stone, but what really must have happened is that light, reflected from the stone, did something to the nervous system of the man. And in the third, we don't know whether anything was done or not, though we can feel reasonably sure that if it was, the question did not do it.

Yet the formal or grammatical structure of all three sentences is exactly the same. We can call the second word in each of them the "subject," the third word the "verb," and the fifth word the "complement" or "direct object." A single diagram would apply to all the sentences, in spite of the differences between the three situations.

This formal similarity has a dangerous tendency to make different situations seem more alike than they actually are. When the sentence structure is obvious, we may forget to examine the structure of events—or even to make sure that there is one. A good many readers will accept perfectly meaningless statements like 'The high temperature caused the heat,' or 'The increased prices made the goods more expensive,' without noticing that the writer is shooting blanks. This explains the popularity of certain books.

Nevertheless, the familiar patterns are indispensable, since they help us to organize our reactions. Without them a writer would simply jumble words into a "sentence" in haphazard order, and it would be a coincidence if any two readers took them as indicating the same relations.

### "UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR"

Two centuries ago most grammarians believed that the whole problem of communication could be solved by studying the formal relations of words to each other, and that these relations were the same in all languages—a 'universal grammar' based on logic. They realized that some degree of human error had crept into every language, but felt that this was very small in Latin and unusually large in English. It was therefore natural that they should attempt to analyze English on the same principles as Latin, and condemn every English practice, no matter how well established, that did not conform to their 'logical' theories.

We know now that other factors have to be considered, and that the basic structures of all languages are not the same. Some of them do not

even have the familiar subject predicate arrangement, which is the very core of our own system, and there is not the slightest evidence that they ever did have it. The idea of universal grammar has been abandoned, and so has the idea that the inevitable changes in language are the results of degeneration from an assumed stage of perfection somewhere in the mysterious past. Although we recognize that some languages are historically related, we now take the view that each one must be studied individually and on its own merits.

### DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE PATTERNS

As a very simple example of the kinds of difference that occur, speakers of English have somehow managed to agree to put a modifier before a substantive rather than after it, while speakers of French use the opposite order. As a result, we automatically take *blue sky* to refer to a weather condition, and *sky blue* to a color, while the French take *bleu ciel* to be the color, and *ciel bleu* the weather condition. There is no use arguing about which is the better method. Either one seems to work satisfactorily as long as we know what to expect.

Sometimes the order is unimportant. *Beautiful house* causes no confusion if it is switched to *house beautiful*. But there is a distinct difference between our reactions to *government business* and *business government*, *American ideal* and *ideal American*, and thousands of other reversible combinations. It must be emphasized that the difference is simply in our habitual reactions. There is no intrinsic difference in the word-order itself, or the French practice would be impossible.

Such differences as these indicate that we should be wary of grammatical rules laid down in the name of logic, especially when they assert that common constructions 'really mean' something quite different from what most speakers intend. Meaning occurs in human nervous systems, not in a vacuum, and our ability to communicate depends on the agreements that, consciously or subconsciously, we have actually made—not on the ones that we 'should' have made.

### THE SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF GRAMMAR

Unfortunately, not all our agreements are as strong or as general as the one about modifier-substantive order. There are a good many points, involving both the forms and the order of words, on which practice is far from uniform. Is it better to say 'He done it' or 'He did it, "It is I" or 'It is me'? Are there any dependable rules about the uses of compound verbs? Is it legitimate to split an infinitive to begin a sentence with *and*, or to end one with a preposition? How many of our words change form, and how, and what is the general effect of each change? When is the order of words automatic, and when does it have to be care-

fully considered? A grammar is simply an organized study of such questions as these

Uniform habits make for better communication and a grammarian has a perfect right (if he likes) to do what he can to encourage uniformity, as long as he doesn't try to subordinate the facts to his theory, or twist the evidence as to what the facts are. If he can show that one construction is more likely to be clearly understood than another, or that it actually enjoys a greater prestige, a good many people will modify their habits accordingly. But a grammarian has no more right to say what our habits ought to be than a chemist has to say how molecules ought to react to changes in temperature.

One more point must be made. The idea that grammar is a logical system has a tendency to make us concentrate on the "concepts" involved, and to turn us away from the study of the actual phenomena of language. A great deal of the material that appears in many texts leads only to the ability to talk *about* the language according to a set of artificial conventions, and has no value whatever in increasing our ability either to use or to understand it.

For instance, it is necessary to distinguish between "direct" and "indirect objects" in Latin for the simple physical reason that they take different forms. In English the distinction, however fascinating, is completely useless. A four-year-old can make and understand sentences like 'He gave me a book', and he won't be able to do either a bit better for learning that *me* may be called an "indirect object" and *book* a "direct object." We do not have separate dative and accusative cases in English, and since the boy is not in the least likely to say "He gave I a book" or "He gave a book me," no question of either form or position is involved. If we force him to "distinguish between these constructions" we are not teaching him anything about the use of the language, but only about an unnecessarily complicated linguistic theory.

It may be that all knowledge is good in itself, and that the question 'Good for what?' is impertinent. But only those who choose to do so need learn about butterflies or old postage stamps, and the one justification for the widespread belief that everybody should learn something about grammar is the theory that a knowledge of it is directly useful in communication. Considering the amounts of time, money, and effort invested, we cannot afford to accept this theory in blind faith.

As a matter of fact, a good many of our educators have stopped accepting it, and have announced that there is no discoverable connection between training in 'formal grammar' and ability to use English effectively.

But instead of recommending changes in our 'formal grammar,' they

have usually been satisfied that it should be abandoned entirely. This is throwing out the baby with the bath. English is not so different from all other subjects that a systematic study of it is worthless. We need only make sure that the system is soundly organized on the basis of the facts, and that we concentrate our attention on the choices we have to make, not on things to say when there is no question of choice.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What does Myers mean by saying that English grammar involves both the *form* and the *order* of words?
- 2 How do we come to know the sort of meaning described as "a more or less general habit of using a given word to indicate a given thing"?
- 3 Why can words do no more than stimulate *similar* not identical reactions in different persons?
- 4 Explain the *mental process* by which we learn to *associate* words with people things events and relationships.
- 5 Why are the associations of words likely to vary greatly from one person to another?
- 6 Why must words be used in more or less regular patterns?
- 7 What are the *proper aims* of the study of grammar?
- 8 What is the purpose of Myers' section headings?
- 9 Do the section headings help to unify the article as well as to divide it?
- 10 What use is made of numbered sets of items as in series numbered (1) (2) (3) etc?
- 11 What are the advantages of using *italics* words spelled in capitals and special typographical arrangements? Are there also disadvantages?
- 12 Is this article closely or loosely organized? What are the chief points the writer wants the reader to remember?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Aint is used frequently by many people in the United States. On what grounds do teachers try to discourage its use? Do you think these grounds are justifiable?
- 2 If a word cannot mean quite the same thing to two different people, how is communication possible?
- 3 Give some examples of words that mean widely varying things to different groups.
- 4 Explain how one learns new words from his reading by other means than looking them up in the dictionary.
- 5 What is meant by the statement that the phenomena of language are *conventional*?
- 6 How can the study of grammar help you to become more skillful in conveying to others what you have to say?

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Why words cannot have only one precise meaning.
- 2 Studying a foreign language can teach you much about your own.

- 3 Analysis of a misunderstanding.
- 4 Why some people "hate English"
- 5 A word whose meaning has changed greatly over a period of time.

## THE EDITORS

### *Danger Freshmen at Work*

One September day you take your seat in your college English class for the first time. The instructor asks the thirty or so students in the class to write half hour papers on their home towns.

'Old stuff,' you think. "Why, I can do that one in my sleep."

The instructor says something about "a clear and unified exposition of your home town as you see it." You hardly hear his words, you know this game, and can turn out a neat string of words that ought to satisfy him if he is at all reasonable. When you have finished, your composition—if you belong to the two-thirds majority of the class—reads something like this:

#### *Pittsburgh*

It has often been said that if Pittsburgh, New York, and perhaps two or three other cities were bombed until their industry was rendered useless that the United States would be powerless and at the supreme will of the enemy. Such a statement is possibly very true.

My home town is Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and I take great pride in the fact that Pittsburgh is my hometown. The great steel industry gave my family a very comfortable living. I was able to develop in the city in a way that I had pride in my town. Pittsburgh—a city of about 700,000—seemed to me a small town where I had interest in the surroundings and events in every part of the city.

Pittsburgh is not merely a memory of smoke and soot to me, but more as a place that recalls memories of gay and colorful times. Picnic grounds, city parks, zoos, and even the smoke stacks of other cities will never have the appeal to my eyes as those of Pittsburgh.

How good are the compositions you and some twenty of your classmates have written? Let's take a closer look at this paper on Pittsburgh.

First, you will note that each paragraph deals with a different topic. The paper begins by saying something about the vulnerability and importance of large cities. Next it mentions the familiar comfort of Pittsburgh as a place to grow up in. Finally it recalls good times enjoyed in spite of the smoke and soot.

In no way do those three points make a whole, no matter how you look at them. The writer of such a composition has not thought of his paper as a unit, he has only assembled some disconnected remarks and put them down on paper.

The instructor finds something very disturbingly wrong about the paper as a whole. He fervently wishes that the writer had expressed *one* idea, in all of its various parts, rather than simply mentioning a series of points having no particular connection with one another.

The instructor's thoughts run something like this: "I can't find the center of this composition, in fact it doesn't seem to have any. It says that although Pittsburgh is important as an industrial center it is also pleasant as a home town."

But that isn't really what the student was trying to say. I suppose he didn't know what he was trying to say. He had no guiding principle, no unifying idea. He just wasn't organized.

I'll have to explain that the problem of exposition is to make one statement, to select the details that will develop and back it up, and to make the whole matter clear to others by arranging the material in a connected way."

So the instructor's thoughts run. And he is right, for the central process in writing exposition is to state an idea and then *develop* it—to select points that are logically parts of it, and to put them down so that they explain the original statement and make it clear to the reader, both as a whole and in each of its parts.

You and twenty other students may ask, "Well, what am I supposed to say about Pittsburgh? What does this instructor want me to say about it?"

He doesn't have any particular statement he wants you to make about it. He simply wants you to collect your own thoughts on Pittsburgh and arrange them in meaningful order. The topic he proposed was your home town as you saw it. Obviously you could have written any one of dozens of different papers on the subject. You could have fulfilled the assignment in many different ways so long as you thought of the city in one aspect, from one point of view, and organized your thoughts in a meaningful sequence. But you could not fulfill it by jotting down in one short paper material on four or five different topics. Such may be the method of very casual conversation, but it isn't good writing.

So the paper on Pittsburgh was not a composition in the full sense of the word, but merely a set of disjointed paragraphs. Also, it was awkward and sometimes incorrect. It wrongly repeated "that" in the first sentence, lamely repeated "home town" in the first sentence of the second paragraph, and said, ungrammatically, "I was able to develop in the city in a way that I had pride in my town." This sentence is difficult to repair,

in fact, the simplest cure is to leave it out entirely, since it reveals that the writer was groping for an idea he never quite found. The same is true of the statement, "I had interest in the surroundings and events in every part of the city." Here the writer was making the unreflecting, rather foolish claim that he was interested in almost everything everywhere in the city.

The moral of this is quite simple. *If your thought is uncertain your sentences will be poor in structure, and your words and phrases will reflect your uncertainty.*

Let us suppose that you were not one of the two-thirds who wrote papers structurally like that on Pittsburgh, but one of the approximately one third who wrote a little more smoothly and connectedly, something like this

### Boulder

Boulder Colorado is a city of fifteen thousand people. The University of Colorado is located there and most of the city's activities and functions are closely related to the college. The college is actually the main industry of Boulder, and without the school the town would have little life.

During the summer months many tourists stop or pass through Boulder. It is one of the gateways to the Rocky Mountains which are a great tourist attraction. The town is built on the edge of the great plains with its back to the rising range of the Rockies. Within a few minutes of Boulder you can be high in the mountains or far out in the flat plains.

In winter months skiing and ice skating are the main attractions. Hundreds of students and local citizens flock to the frozen lakes or to one of the many ski runs.

As in any small town you soon know practically everyone you meet. It is hard to realize the value of many friends and the feeling of being known which is hard to obtain in a larger city.

Sounds better, doesn't it? Yet even approximately the one third who wrote at this level were floundering, though not so badly as the majority.

Fifteen thousand people importance of the University location draws tourists winter sports friendliness. These are all bits from a commercial folder. They don't reveal that the writer has a sense of composition. He starts with a flat statement of population figures then puts down the idea that most of the city's activities are related to the university. Here he has an excellent central idea for a paper, but he apparently does not know what he has, and he fails to follow it up. Instead he leaves it for a moment to speak of the tourists that come through Boulder in the summer, then mentions winter sports briefly, and concludes with still another new point, the friendliness of the town.

Now this student and the others who wrote in the same way were able for some reason to write without the distressing awkwardness of state-



ment that marred the paper on Pittsburgh. This paper on Boulder is really just a series of scraps of thought, yet it sounds fairly easy and pleasant. If you will look at it closely you will see that it is by no means as chaotic as the one on Pittsburgh. It contains four more or less distinct ideas, one to each paragraph. Any one of them would have served as a core around which to develop a whole composition. The writer came close to grasping the principle of unified composition and his writing is more fluent. The moral: *You will write more meaningful sentences and phrases when you have a better sense of general organization.*

Is there no adequate paper among the thirty compositions? Is there no paper which simply develops an idea about the character of a town? Well, there is one that comes close. Though its writer does not completely grasp the problem of making and developing a statement, he has at least some sense of how to proceed. The paper embodies a central idea, it is developed a little by selecting and arranging pertinent detail, and there is a sort of summary.

#### *Oakland*

*Oakland is my home town although it is more a fairly large city than a town. Its chief characteristic seems to be that it covers a large area and thus makes transportation very difficult.*

The city is apt to depend upon San Francisco, its neighbor, rather than to have a more or less independent existence as do other similar cities. Many Oakland residents work across the bay, and Oakland is known as San Francisco's bedroom.

Just as occupational activities are concentrated in the other city, so are cultural matters considered almost second class in Oakland. The Oakland Symphony orchestra is not the equal of the San Francisco orchestra; the museums and art galleries and the theatre are slighted in Oakland. Thus what goes on in Oakland must be considered in the light of its proximity to a larger and more important city.

Industry in my home town is growing; in fact growth is everywhere and the city holds more promise at the moment than it does actual accomplishment. The port promises to become very important in the future. Army and Navy installations should play an important part in this development. Oakland is the western terminus of the railroads and will not be by-passed by expanding industry for this reason.

My home town then is this. It is a large city, but it is not like similar cities because of its relation to other cities of the bay area. It is one of a network of towns and cities which have grown up around San Francisco bay.

When you have read this paper you feel that the writer had some sort of pattern in mind when he started and that he has communicated to you a nearly unified impression. If you look carefully at this paper, however, you will see that the ideas are not all perfectly connected and that

there are some mistakes of punctuation and capitalization. Yet mistakes of this kind are far easier to correct than the flaws that arise out of basic difficulties of organization. Poor organization creates a tangle of incomplete thought, loose ends, and awkward phrasing. It makes efficient communication impossible.

Let us see what the writer of the paper on Oakland has done. In the first paragraph he makes clear that Oakland is big in area. In the second paragraph he states his thesis, that Oakland is dependent on San Francisco, and gives as an example the dependence of Oakland residents on San Francisco for employment. This idea concerning dependence in one respect leads naturally enough to the idea of dependence in other respects, such as orchestras, museums, art galleries, and theatres. Then the writer suggests that the reason for Oakland's cultural inferiority is its nearness to an even bigger city. (This bit of reflectiveness is a good omen for later work, it shows he is interested in discovering causes, in drawing conclusions from observed phenomena.)

But with the beginning of the fourth paragraph, the writer makes a rather abrupt shift to the topic of the growth of industry. He doesn't demonstrate a close logical connection between this point and the other points in his paper. As a result the reader is a little confused, he can understand the statements easily enough, but they mean little to him because he is not led to see them as parts of a consecutive argument.

In the fifth and last paragraph the writer returns to the point made in the second paragraph and brings the paper to a close, adding, however, a final sentence that should have been inserted earlier.

Even the writer of the Oakland paper seems only half-conscious that he was developing and substantiating the assertion that Oakland is different from other cities of like size because of its relation to San Francisco. Of all the thirty students he had the clearest sense of how to make and develop a statement, yet there is something that seems almost accidental in the structure of his composition.

What is the central difficulty of all these papers, and how can it be overcome?

The answer is more simple to state than to put into practice. It is concerned with planning.

Actually, many freshmen are familiar with only one principle of organization—the chronological. This oldest and most primitive of patterns has served them through high school to write about trips, to compose brief biographies, and perhaps to describe simple processes. But for many purposes the chronological pattern is of no use. College level composition calls for many different patterns, all of which have one element in common: *they depend on the logical connection of ideas*.

Various names have been used to describe logical patterns "cause-to-effect," "comparison-and contrast," "familiar-to-unfamiliar," "definition," "exemplification," "alternation," and a number of others. They are useful in classifying pieces of writing for close analytical study in textbooks, but they are not indispensable. One can learn to write well with them or without them, they merely offer one among many pathways to understanding.

The true essentials are much reading of good writing, much practice in your own writing, and much editing and correction by a good teacher. Always there must be the determination to avoid being scatterbrained—to make a meaningful central statement, to develop it logically by discovering and stating points subordinate to it, and to illustrate these points with evidence.

A few hints may help: take some pains in thinking out your central idea, make a short outline before you start, be sure you select truly relevant facts to support the central idea, and be sure that you show the reader unmistakably how each idea is related to the preceding idea and to the whole. Finally, remember to think in terms of the whole.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 In what sense can it be said that the paper on Pittsburgh lacks unity?
- 2 What effect on the details of one's writing do the authors ascribe to poor general organization? What reasons can you suggest why there should be such an effect?
- 3 Explain why the paper on Boulder is better in structure than that on Pittsburgh.
- 4 What is the central point of the paper on Oakland? In what respect could this be called a negative point rather than a positive one? Suggest a more positive point which the writer might have made the center of his paper.
- 5 Point out some of the means which the writers of this article have used to give prominence to certain ideas.
- 6 What are the principal parts of the article? By what means have the authors made them distinct?
- 7 What principle of arrangement is illustrated by the order in which the article takes up the three student papers?
- 8 What purposes are served by the article's detailed analyses of the three student papers?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What is the basic meaning of the word *organization*? What are some of the general principles of organization as applied to the construction of a theme?
- 2 What are some defects of a purely chronological plan of organization? Is it the best plan for the description of a trip? For the description of a town? For a paper on antique glass? For a paper on deceptive adver

- tising? For a paper on baseball? Explain why it is or is not the best plan in each case, and where it is not, suggest a better one.
- 3 Suppose you had to write a description of a library of a hundred books. Of these 85 are in English and 15 are in six different foreign languages. 10 are on sports, 30 on science, 20 on economics, 25 on Chinese art, 5 on political history and 8 on miscellaneous subjects; and two are dictionaries. Make what you think is the most logical arrangement of them for the purpose of writing a description.

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 My family's history
- 2 The personalities in my family
- 3 My home town.
- 4 How I arranged my library
- 5 The encyclopedia pattern is a poor one for college compositions.
- 6 The value of an outline as preparation for writing a paper

## WILLIAM H. WHYTE, JR.

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## The Language of Business

### I

Not so long ago, the business man used to take his language pretty much for granted. He could afford to. His place was respected and his authority unquestioned. And so he bought, he sold, he collected his bills, made an occasional speech perhaps—and if the public, the workers, or the government didn't quite understand what he was up to, well, so much the better for all concerned.

But no longer. Acknowledging the fact—and the necessity—of others' scrutiny, he has made the interchange of facts and ideas with them one of his principal jobs. The house organ, the interoffice memo, the press release, the press conference, the annual report—the range of his efforts has grown enormous. So widespread, indeed, that business has become almost as extensive a publisher as the government itself.

Is the language of business up to the job? The news—and refreshing news it is—is that the American businessman himself has begun to con-

clude that it is not. Some, in fact, have gone so far as to assert that the pomposity of management prose is the "root ill of our communication troubles." While that may be an overexcited judgment, management's surveys have demonstrated that a large amount of its language has been not only incomprehensible to the people it is trying to reach, but enormously expensive in money, time, and misunderstanding as well. "It is high time the American businessman discovered the English language—it would be very useful to him." "We've turned our offices into paper mills." "We love curt clear correspondence—but damned few of us know how to write it." Everywhere the chorus of self-criticism is growing.

The positive results of this self-examination have been impressive. In company after company, executives have been setting up "writing clinics" to scour management copy, staging correspondence improvement courses, holding school in conference and public-speaking techniques, and, at the very least, peppering subordinates with "For-God's-sake-won't you people learn-to-use English around here" memos. All of which is clearly to the good. At the same time—and not so clearly to the good—a school of experts has come forward to help the businessman by redesigning the language of industry. To accomplish this, the experts have developed a scientific method that, as we shall see later, has some disturbing implications. Meanwhile, a look at the anatomy of this language that is to be redesigned.

First, the written variety—and that infamous jargon, which, for want of a better term, we'll call *businessese*. Its signal characteristic, as the reader and all other critics of *businessese* will recognize, is its uniformity. Almost invariably, *businessese* is marked by the heavy use of the passive construction. Nobody ever *does* anything. Things *happen*—and the author of the action is only barely implied. Thus, one does not refer to something, reference is made to, similarly, while prices may rise, nobody *raises* them. To be sure, in *businessese* there is not quite the same anonymity as is found in federal prose, for "I" and "we" do appear often. Except when the news to be relayed is good, however, there is no mistaking that the "I" and "we" are merely a convenient fiction and that the real author isn't a person at all but that great mystic force known as the corporation.

Except for a few special expressions, its vocabulary is everywhere quite the same. Midwesterners are likely to dispute the latter point, but a reading of approximately 500,000 words of business prose indicates no striking differences—in the Midwest or anywhere else. Moreover, in sounding out a hundred executives on the subject, *FORTUNE* found that their views coincided remarkably, particularly so in the matter of pet

peeves (principally "please be advised," "in reference to yours of     ", "we wish to draw attention," "to acknowledge your letter") The phrases of businessese are everywhere so uniform, in fact, that stenographers have a full set of shorthand symbols for them

Because of this uniformity, defenders of businessese can argue that it doesn't make for misunderstanding After all, everybody knows the symbols, and, furthermore, wouldn't a lot of people be offended by the terseness of more concise wording? There is something to this theory Since businessese generally is twice as wordy as plain English, however, the theory is rather expensive to uphold By the use of regular English the cost of the average letter—commonly estimated at 75 cents to \$1—can be cut by about 20 cents For a firm emitting a million letters a year, this could mean an annual saving of \$200,000 Probably it would be even greater, for, by the calculations of correspondence specialist Richard Morris, roughly 15 per cent of the letters currently being written wouldn't be necessary at all if the preceding correspondence had been in regular English in the first place

Where do the terms of businessese come from? Most, of course, are hand me downs from former generations of businessmen, but many are the fruit of cross fertilization with other jargons A businessman who castigates government bureaucrats, for example, is at the same time apt to be activating, expediting, implementing effectuating, optimizing, minimizing, and maximizing—and at all levels and echelons within the framework of broad policy areas Similarly, though he is amused by the long hairs and the social scientists, he is beginning to speak knowingly of projective techniques, social dynamics, depth interviewing, and sometime soon, if he keeps up at this rate, he will probably appropriate that hall-mark of the sound sociological paper, "insightful" Businessese, in fact, has very nearly become the great common meeting ground of the jargons

Why do people who in private talk so pungently often write so pompously? There are many reasons tradition, the demands of time, carelessness, the conservative influence of the secretary Above all is the simple matter of status Theorem the less established the status of a person, the more his dependence on jargon Examine the man who has just graduated from pecking out his own letters to declaiming them to a secretary and you are likely to have a man hopelessly intoxicated with the rhythm of businessese Conversely, if you come across a blunt yes or no in a letter, you don't need to glance further to grasp that the author feels pretty firm in his chair

The application of euphemism, a favored device of businessese, further illustrates this status principle Take the field of selling At the top of the ladder you will find a great many people in it sales managers, vice

presidents for *sales*, etc. As you go down the ranks, however, it becomes difficult to find people in this line of work. Field underwriters, estate planners, merchandising apprentices, social engineers, distribution analysts, and representatives of one kind or another, yes. But *salesmen*? Rarely.

Not only does *businessese* confer status, it protects it as well, by its magnificent usefulness for buck passing and hedging. "All you have to remember," one executive says, "is the one basis which characterizes all such intracommunication: let the language be ambiguous enough that if the text be successfully carried out, all credit may be claimed, but if the text be unsuccessfully carried out, a technical alibi can be set up out of the text itself."

For this purpose there is a regular subglossary of *businessese*. Most notable terms: "in the process of," "at this time," "under consideration," "in the not too-distant future," "company policy," and, when one is unable to explain something properly, "obviously." People who have to submit periodic reports to their superiors are particularly dependent on such terms—salesmen, for example, would have a hard time if they couldn't report of some prospects that they were "very impressed" ("I am allergic to that word," says one sales manager. "It results in so few orders.")

The full application of *businessese* to hedging occurs when more than two heads are put to work on a problem. As the members of top management sit around the table, a relatively simple policy statement is introduced for discussion. This is kicked around a bit, as the saying goes, for though it certainly is a fine statement, couldn't agree with it more, there are just a few little angles and suggestions that maybe ought to be noted. Thereupon each executive, much as a baseball captain grasps a bat in choosing up sides, adds his qualification, until finally the original statement has been at once pointed up, toned down, given more dignity, made more forceful, altered to anticipate possible objections, concretized, amended, and resolved. Now no longer a mere statement but a philosophy, or collection of philosophies, it is turned over to the Public Relations Department to give to the waiting public. There is nothing, as so many people say, quite like what you get when everybody on the team works together.

#### REVERSE GOBBLEDEGOOK

Besides written *businessese*, there is another and far more influential category of business English. Generally, it is found in the spoken language of business—in particular, that brand to be heard at the banquet table, the convention, and the conference table.

It might best be called *reverse* gobbledegook, for in almost every outward respect it is the opposite of written jargon. Where written jargon is multisyllabic, the other is filled with short terse words, its sentences are short and their construction so much more active than passive that exclamation marks occur almost as frequently as periods. It is English that is on the beam, English with its feet on the ground, in short, *shirt-sleeve* English.

Thanks to reverse gobbledegook, the less you have to say, the more emphatically you can say it. All one has to do is use certain hard-hitting expressions, and refer as frequently as possible to the fact that these expressions are being used. A sure forewarning of its onrush, accordingly, is a prefatory announcement by the speaker that he is not going to beat around the bush, pull any punches, pussyfoot, use two-dollar words, or the like. The rest is inevitable, so standardized are the expressions of reverse gobbledegook that an audience would be stunned to attention were a single one of them altered by so much as a word. (One of these days a clever speaker is going to capitalize on this "Gentlemen," he will say, "I offer a panacea.")

As a result, reverse gobbledegook can be self-defeating, that is, since its whole effect lies in the dynamic quality the words convey, their constant use tends to neutralize them. This can be overcome, however, by adding strengtheners—so that, in a very real sense of the word, it cannot be overemphasized that you sincerely, and unquestionably, meant what you said in the first place.

Like written businessese, reverse gobbledegook also confers status. For this purpose, it provides a sort of slang that, skillfully applied—particularly at the conference table—will impart to the user an appearance of savviness, cooniness, and general know how. Want to mark yourself as a comer in the advertising field? Speak, then, of fun stories, sweet guys, the hard sell, straw men you set up to back into, and points you can hang your hat on. For each field you will find a subglossary, and, common to all of them, such universal terms as "play it by ear," "the pitch," "the deal," and the many expressions built on the suffix "wise" ("Budget wise, Al, the pitch shapes up like this . . .").

Another characteristic of reverse gobbledegook is its dependence on analogy and metaphor. During a single banquet you may find business problems equated with an airplane, a broad highway, a boat being rocked, a river, a riverbank, a stream, a bridge, a train, a three legged stool, and, sometimes, three or four of these things at once in which case the passage is generally summed up with something like "It's as simple as that," or "That's all there is to the problem." (From a recent speech "So business enterprise of America is trying to hone a sales force into the cutting edge of an economy and there is a virus running rampant in the flock.



Security-mindedness is a log across the stream when it comes to developing the optimistic salesman outlook ")

Outstanding is the great American football analogy. No figure of speech is a tenth as seductive to the businessman. Just why this should be so—baseball, curiously, is much less used—is generally explained by its adaptability to all sorts of situations. Furthermore, the football analogy is *satisfying*. It is bounded by two goal lines and is thus finite. There is always a solution. And that is what makes it so often treacherous.

For analogy and metaphor can be insidiously attractive substitutes for thought. They are not, of course, when fleetingly used, when, as H. W. Fowler puts it (in *Modern English Usage*), they "flash out for the length of a line or so and are gone," but this is rarely the case in reverse gobbledegook. The user starts innocuously enough, his policy is *like* a thingamajig in one respect. But only the stanchest mind can resist the analogy further. Before long he is entwined, and unconsciously operating on the premise that his policy *is* a thingamajig. The language, in short, has molded thinking, and the results can be a good bit more serious than a poor speech.

The mishaps of one consumer goods corporation illustrate this hazard. Not so long ago, the men who owned the company were casting about for a Goal. Up to then it had been money. But now they had acquired a lot of it, they were getting on in years, and anyway it didn't sound good. And so, on this enlightened-goal problem, the Chief fell to pondering at the conference table. When you get right down to it, the company was just like a big football team. You don't win unless you have a good team, do you? You could say that again. Well, before he gets a good team, what does the coach have to do? Very simple. He has to go out and find good players. Just thinking out loud, mind you, but wasn't the big job then to get the right recruits?

Almost automatically, this was mimeographed as the company's ration ale—"The Touchdown Play" it was called—and before long executives were spending almost as much time on the new trainees as they were on their regular jobs, and when they weren't doing this, they were scouring the colleges for more. Everything went swimmingly, the policy was soon the wonder of the merchandising world, the top executives were suffused with a sense of enlightenment—and the place was jammed with eager young men.

In only one respect did the analogy break down. A year later practically all of the competition came out with a new product embodying a notable technical advance. Our company didn't. It was still getting the team ready.

Now with almost every use of the cliché and stereotype mentioned so

far, a better case could be made out for the use of simple, unhackneyed English. It is a mistake, however, to be too rigorously critical on this score. Since the symbols of language convey emotion as well as communicate facts and ideas, many a prefabricated phrase has become inextricably tied with certain emotional responses. This infuriates the semanticists—"intensional thinking" is their cuss word for it—but a good part of business has been built on it. The American sales meeting, certainly, would be quite impossible otherwise.

Furthermore business, like many another occupation, is governed by a ritual as rigid as the steps of ballet, and while the efficient executive makes fun of all this, he has the good sense to know when to put it to use himself. The dinner for the retiring employee, for example, for years this has been prime fodder for short-story writers. But what if the toastmaster were to dispense with the timeworn expressions and thus tacitly concede what everyone knows to be nothing less than the truth: that old Charlie has been getting in everybody's hair for the last fifteen years and it'll be wonderful to see him go. Everyone, Charlie's worst enemies included, would be shocked, morale would suffer, and the usefulness of the executive to the organization would be lessened.

So with the interoffice memo about the man being horizontally promoted to some branch office. Again the ceremonial is unvarying: pillar of strength, larger responsibilities, Ed's invaluable experience in this field makes him the logical, know the whole staff will join me in wishing Ed good luck in his new job. Nobody is fooled in the slightest, of course, but what could have been a disagreeable, and for Ed a shattering experience is smoothed over by the blessed analgesic of businessese. There is *something* of a case for timeworn expressions. But it is a case that needs no further making.

## 2

For all its faults, business language is the subject of plenty of good news. Over a third of top U.S. corporations, a *FORTUNE* sampling indicates, have set up some sort of program to improve it. Monsanto Chemical and Glidden Co. are working on both letters and interoffice memos. "In our campaign to simplify communications," reports Glidden's President Dwight Joyce, "we encourage 'Yes' and 'No' answers, which in turn makes for briefer, clearer questions." Montgomery Ward uses slide films to show its people how to write good will building letters. Numerous banks, insurance companies, and department stores have engaged experts to simplify and personalize their letters. And over the past two years the "Cy" Frailey business-correspondence courses sponsored by the

Dartnell Corp in major cities of the US have attracted 25,000 executives

Public speaking courses are provided by such companies as SKF, Jones & Laughlin, and Johnson & Johnson. In the last two years General Motors has encouraged 2,000 of its management and supervisory people to express themselves better by taking Dale Carnegie speech courses. Business and management associations (e.g., National Association of Manufacturers, American Management Association, American Institute of Banking, National Association of Foremen) publish material on speech training. In one notable instance, at Bridgeport, Connecticut, an informal group of businessmen became so absorbed in the problem that they chipped in and hired a Yale professor to teach them how to address groups and conduct meetings. And evidently the crusade is more than a nine-to-five concern of businessmen. To judge from recent book sales, they are reading more "practical English" and vocabulary building books than ever before.

Paralleling these better-business English efforts has been a movement of even greater significance. It has been called the "plain talk" movement, but it is, in fact, a sort of prose engineering program, for its core is the use of some newly refined scientific techniques to achieve readability. In only four years it has already produced a measurable effect on the English of business and, if it continues to thrive, it will have a profound effect not only on the English of business but on the English of advertising, journalism, and literature as well.

How did it happen? Such phenomena are usually hard to account for. This one, however, is not.

"My own contribution has been quite modest," readability expert Dr. Rudolf Flesch recently told a convention of P. R. men, "but I think I can truthfully say that it has already had some effect." Dr. Flesch was unduly modest. Rarely have the man and the moment collided so effectively. Almost from the moment in 1946 when he turned his Columbia Ph.D. thesis on readability into the best-selling *The Art of Plain Talk*, Flesch's impact has been tremendous.

The scientific basis was not new; it was evolved by psychologists in the 1920's for the grading and writing of children's textbooks. But as developed by Flesch it gave a new form—and justification—to a movement that had been overtaking American prose. "It was as if," recalls one enthusiast, "we had just been waiting for someone to break the ice."

What Flesch teaches, briefly, is a scientific method of achieving plain, understandable prose. To this end we should write as we talk, eschew irony, rhythm, rhetorical sentences, substitute concrete for abstract words. Equally important, we should surcharge our prose with as much

human interest as possible. Then, to measure how we are succeeding, we can apply two formulas. One, based on syllable and sentence count per 100 words, measures the 'reading ease' of our writing. The other, based on the percentage of 'personal' words and sentences, measures its 'human interest'. The reading ease index is tied to the different levels of the U.S. adult population. Thus we can scientifically make sure that we are writing to the level of our particular audience—or better yet, as Flesch advises, somewhat below it. The reading-ease formula—statisticians call it "regression equation"—is  $206.835$  minus  $(1.015 \text{ times the average number of words per sentence})$  plus  $(.846 \text{ times the number of syllables per 100 words})$ . Using this (simplified in chart form for quick use), we find that the reading-ease score of the two preceding text paragraphs is 53. This puts them on the 'fairly difficult'—i.e., high school—reading level, and thus readable by 54 per cent of the adult population. Human-interest score 30 ('interesting').

The first impact of this doctrine was on newspaper writing, but soon it was making itself felt in another field. For years industrial psychologists had been champing to apply scientific methods to employee-management communication material, but, what with cultural lag troubles, they hadn't been able to get very far. And now here at last was the ideal wedge, "the effectiveness [of] the Flesch formula," as one put it, "forces the issue." Enthusiastically they fell to work measuring house-organ prose, reconstructing information bulletins, and in general showing business just how terrible its stuff was and how much better it could be.

Before long another readability expert, Robert Gunning, was making studies for Borden's, the B & O Railroad, and other large companies. John McElroy (formerly head of Gunning's industrial division) set up Readability Associates, and was soon holding seminars on his "fog-count" system for such firms as Ford, Detroit Edison, and American Airlines. General Motors, making a broad attack on the readability problem, has at times employed all three experts, Gunning, McElroy, and Flesch. (G.M. has devised a "Reading Ease Calculator"—a kind of wheel by which, with a minimum of mathematics, the prose in its twenty-seven employee publications can be measured. Also it has Purdue psychologists compiling a list of the words most frequently used by G.M. personnel, and is measuring the reading ability levels of some of its employee groups.) The Psychological Corp. began four-day workshops, where, at \$500 a head, company representatives could be instructed in the readability techniques so that they in turn could go back and teach them to others. Even the military joined in, in the most notable of such efforts the Air Materiel Command got out an official—and highly readable—

manual on the Flesch approach and put psychologist A. O. England to work indoctrinating all hands in it

### WRITING-TALKING?

What's been the effect of all this? The readability formulas have dramatized, as no subjective critique ever could, the needless obscurity and pomposity of much everyday language. Furthermore, the readability texts have been full of so much good sense on such matters as grammar and punctuation that they have served to encourage the timid away from outworn do's and don't's of writing. Wherever the readability doctrines have been taught, there has been not only a decrease in the use of jargon, but a new enthusiasm and respect for the rhythm of colloquial speech.

So far, so good. But how much further, and then how good? The implications of the readability approach warrant careful thought. For if American "functional" English is to be homogenized more and more along these new lines, we should at least, before it all becomes official, have a hard look at what it is leading us to. In purest businessese, is there a danger that we'll jump out of a Pandora's box into a fire?

First, a look at some of the new rules. Most important, the advice that is the core of the movement—to write as we talk. Part of the "secret" of readable writing, we are told, lies in repetition and loosely built sentences—because that is the way we talk. Well, at least that's the way some people talk—haltings, backtrackings, and that sort of thing—they talk on forever sometimes—a lot of excelsior, that's what it adds up to—and it's not difficult at all, because it's certainly easier than the old-fashioned way of organizing your thoughts. In fact, there is only one real question to be raised: Are talking and writing the same thing? They are not—and to say that they should be allows and encourages us to rationalize sloppiness and faulty thinking.

In this colloquializing we are also adjured to make everything into a human-interest story (Flesch: "There's nothing on earth that cannot be told through a hero or heroine who's trying to solve a problem in spite of a series of obstacles.") It is true, of course, that one who describes a problem in terms of the simple love of a man for his dog, a tale as old as time, we have a more readable piece than one who tends to somewhat more abstract treatment. But there are quite a number of things that cannot be explained by a human-interest tale, and to treat them as if they could be is to mislead the reader by oversimplifying.

Emphasis on the short word, naturally enough, is another feature of the plain-talk movement, and while the readability experts themselves caution people against applying this prescription too rigidly, it has

reached a rather extreme point of veneration. Short words, certainly, need no defense. But there are times when the longer one is the *right* word, and if it were not used the writer would have to take up more space saying it another way. And even if the long word were unknown to such and such a percentage of the audience, it might be perfectly clear—or stimulating—to them in a context of sound, lucid English. The Elizabethans knew this well—and so, for that matter, do the pulp writers (e.g., the gibbous moon, the lambent rays, diaphanous dresses, etc.)

By now, if we have followed the above rules, our style should be understandable enough. Just to make sure, however, Flesch has a few more rules

*Do not use rhythm (maybe your reader won't catch on)*

*Do not use periodic sentences*

*Do not use rhetorical questions*

*Do not use metaphors without an explanation*

*Do not use contrast without an explanation*

*Do not use irony (half the people won't get it)*

Now we are not to forswear these devices because they are bad, we are to discard them because somebody *might* possibly misunderstand us. The blood-toil-tears-and-sweat metaphor of Churchill, for example. "The reader gets a vague notion," says Flesch, "that Churchill used a little word picture of three wet things instead of saying *war*, and that's that." Flesch goes on to ask a rhetorical question: would "you must expect great suffering and hard work" have been a better way to put it? "Nobody, of course," he says, "can answer such a question." Nobody? We'll take a crack at it. NO!

If we have followed these rules, we are now able to talk the level of language the audience will be able to understand "without effort." But even this is not enough. *We must go one step below that level.* We must "shoot beneath the target"; we must "translate down the scale." And for this we don't even need the formulas, for, as Flesch correctly points out, this writing down should by now have become instinctive to us.

Let us imagine that over the next hundred years everyone followed this advice and deliberately wrote beneath the capabilities of his audience. What would happen? Theoretically, we would get ourselves into a sort of ever decreasing circle, and, as layer after layer of our language atrophied, eventually spiral our way back to the schoolbook level that got the whole readability doctrine under way in the first place. The "regression" equation would be complete.

And haven't we gone quite far enough as it is? Already we have turned the man in the street into a Frankenstein. We hand him an electric re-

corder to edit our movies, we watch his radio dial to predetermine what we will put on the air—and now we are to ape him to learn how to write

We should long since have delivered ourselves of this oaf, for in reality he does not even exist. He is a self-perpetuating stereotype, the reflection of the lowest common denominators we have been looking for. In creating him we have done not only ourselves but our audiences a disservice, for though they will respond to the tawdry, they will also respond—as many a book, speech, ad, and movie has demonstrated—to the best we give them. But they cannot if we abdicate our moral obligation to give *the best that is in us*.

### THE ELUSIVE SIMPLICITY

So what of the formulas? What do they really measure? Understandability? (And, if so, of what?) Simplicity? Or merely the number of things they are supposed to measure? For a practical experiment, *FORTUNE* selected thirteen out of a collection of 100 business speeches. The eight most fatuous of the speeches were put in one group, the five most lucid were put in another. Each speech was then evaluated by means of the two formulas to find its reading-ease and human interest scores. The result: there was practically no significant difference between the average scores of the two groups. (Average reading-ease score 61—eighth- and ninth-grade reading level, average human interest score 40—"very interesting.") All, then, represented good "plain talk"—and there was nothing in the scores to indicate the tremendous disparity between the two types.

In thus ignoring the relationship between style and content, the formulas have ignored the fundamentals of language. Language is not something we can disembody; it is an ethical as well as mechanical matter, inextricably bound up in ourselves, our positions, and our relations with those about us. When a businessman doubletalks, for example, it is often for reasons deeper than mishandled prose—hypersensitivity to criticism, fear of the competition, fear of getting out of line with trade-association policy, fear of a government suit, a serious split in corporation policy—or, as is occasionally the case, the lack of any policy to begin with. Is "plain talk" the answer here? It is not. It is a fraud on the listener.

For it is only the illusion of simplicity that the manipulation of language can win for us. Simplicity is an elusive, almost complex thing. It comes from discipline and organization of thought, intellectual courage—and many other attributes more hard won than by short words and short sentences. For plain talk—honest plain talk—is the reward of

simplicity, not the means to it. The distinction may seem slight, but it is tremendously important.

In a sense, this whole prose-engineering movement is a measure of the growing specialization of our society—for it is an attempt to provide a sort of pidgin English by which we can intercommunicate over the gaps. So let us give the readability people their due. At least they have tried to bridge the gaps and, perhaps more important, they have called our attention to the necessity for doing so. We owe them, then, a debt—and if their solution falls short in many respects, the very avidity with which people have seized on it is proof enough that there is a void to fill.

Thus the readability movement is also the measure of the failure of our schools and colleges. Patently, something is very wrong with the teaching of English when graduates so fail to grasp the fundamentals of good English that they feel they must learn a separate kind for everyday life—and a rather bobtail one at that. The fault may be, as some have claimed, that our academic English courses are still set up on the implicit assumption that their function is to provide a schooling for those who are to be novelists, poets, and scholars. Perhaps it is for this reason that the word "literary" is increasingly used as a term of opprobrium.

Meanwhile the teaching of English in the non-liberal-arts courses has been geared more and more to the "functional" kind of writing the graduate will perform. "In my opinion," says Professor Edward Kilduff of N.Y.U.'s School of Commerce, "the most effective kind of English composition being taught today is the realistic, practical non-literary American type that we find in such courses as business writing, engineering writing, newspaper writing, publicity writing, and advertising writing."

True or not, is a further extension of this trend necessarily the answer? Specialization in our colleges has already gone so far that it is hard to see how a further breakdown of the humanities would be anything but harmful. We do not need more "applied" English courses, what we need, first of all, is better basic ones. How this is to be achieved in our schools and colleges is a difficult problem, but it is time we were about it.

For somewhere, certainly, between the extremes of the "functional" and the "literary" there is a happy middle ground. Those firms who have pioneered in improving the language of their people seem to have reached the same conclusion. The great majority of their courses, seminars, and "clinics" have been concentrated not on supplying rules to be slavishly followed—but on provoking an awareness of good English. Their example is one that all of U.S. business can follow with great profit.

In the meantime let us not forswear all the richness of our language. Its misuse is not the root ill of our communication problem, it is only



the signal of it. And if we make a real effort to win mutual understanding, we need have no fear of the infinite variety of our language—or the ability of our listeners to respond to it. All of which applies to businessmen no less than to everyone else in our society. When businessmen have something to say, and mean it, and feel it, their audience will understand.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What are the chief characteristics of "businessese"?
2. What are the arguments for regarding "status" as a cause of businessese?
3. What are the characteristics of "reverse gobbledegook"?
4. What fact about language makes the stereotypes of businessese useful in some instances?
5. What are the chief methods of the "plain talk movement"?
6. What are the chief dangers the article sees in the plain talk movement?
7. What ethical considerations must be remembered in seeking simplicity and readability of language?
8. This article was written for businessmen. In what ways does it attempt to gain the interest and agreement of such an audience?
9. Early in the article the author quietly announces its main purposes. What are they and where is the passage?
10. Could this article have been split into two or more parts each of which could with little change stand as a separate article? Where in the article would such divisions be feasible?
11. Point out some places where the writer has deliberately used slang. What do you think was his purpose in doing so? Did he achieve his purpose?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do you think colleges should do to improve the English of students who will be employed in business?
2. What does the use of "reverse gobbledegook" suggest about the sincerity of business meetings and the like?
3. What recommendations of the "plain talk" or readability experts are useful in any kind of writing?
4. Is it really possible for people to write as they speak? What are some of the chief differences between written and spoken language?
5. Comment on the article's final sentence: "When businessmen have something to say, and mean it, and feel it, their audience will understand."

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. "Reverse gobbledegook" in sports.
2. *Clichés* in political speeches.
3. Businessese and governmentese.
4. Dangers of digest magazines.
5. How the newspaper I read could improve its readability.

## SAMUEL T. WILLIAMSON

born 1891 American writer and editor is the author of *Frank Gannett*, a biography and with R. M. Cleveland of *The Road Is Yours*, a history of the automobile [From *The Saturday Review of Literature*, October 4 1947, reprinted by permission of the author]

### *How to Write Like a Social Scientist*

During my years as an editor, I have seen probably hundreds of job applicants who were either just out of College or in their senior year. All wanted 'to write.' Many brought letters from their teachers. But I do not recall one letter announcing that its bearer could write what he wished to say with clarity and directness, with economy of words, and with pleasing variety of sentence structure.

Most of these young men and women could not write plain English. Apparently their noses had not been rubbed in the drudgery of putting one simple well chosen word behind the other. If this was true of teachers' pets, what about the rest? What about those going into business and industry? Or those going into professions? What about those who remain at college—first for a Master of Arts degree, then an instructorship combined with work for a Ph D, then perhaps an assistant professorship, next a full professorship and finally, as an academic crown of laurel, appointment as head of a department or as dean of a faculty?

Certainly, faculty members of a front rank university should be better able to express themselves than those they teach. Assume that those in the English department have this ability. Can the same be said of the social scientists—economists, sociologists, and authorities on government? We need today as we never needed so urgently before all the understanding they can give us of problems of earning a living, caring for our fellows, and governing ourselves. Too many of them, I find, can't write as well as their students.

I am still convalescing from overexposure some time ago to products of the academic mind. One of the foundations engaged me to edit manuscripts of a socio-economic research report designed for the thoughtful citizen as well as for the specialist. My expectations were not high—no deathless prose, merely a sturdy, no nonsense report of explorers into the wilderness of statistics and half known facts. I knew from experience that economic necessity compels many a professional writer to be a cream skimmer and a gatherer of easily obtainable material, for unless his publishers will stand the extra cost, he cannot afford the exhaustive investigation which endowed research makes possible.

Although I did not expect fine writing from a trained, professional researcher, I did assume that a careful fact finder would write carefully

And so, anticipating no literary treat, I plunged into the forest of words of my first manuscript. My weapons were a sturdy eraser and several batteries of sharpened pencils. My armor was a thesaurus. And if I should become lost, a near by public library was a landmark, and the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences on its reference shelves was an ever-ready guide.

Instead of big trees, I found underbrush. Cutting through involved, lumbering sentences was bad enough, but the real chore was removal of the burdocks of excess verbiage which clung to the manuscript. Nothing was big or large, in my author's lexicon. It was "substantial." When he meant "much," he wrote "to a substantially high degree." If some event took place in the early 1920's, he put it "in the early part of the decade of the twenties." And instead of "that depends," my author wrote, "any answer to this question must bear in mind certain peculiar characteristics of the industry."

So it went for 30,000 words. The pile of verbal burdocks grew—sometimes twelve words from a twenty-word sentence. The shortened version of 20,000 words was perhaps no more thrilling than the original report, but it was terser and crisper. It took less time to read and it could be understood quicker. That was all I could do. As S. S. McClure once said to me, "An editor can improve a manuscript, but he cannot put in what isn't there."

I did not know the author I was editing, after what I did to his copy it may be just as well that we have not met. Aside from his cat chasing its-own-tail verbosity, he was a competent enough workman. Apparently he is well thought of. He has his doctorate, he is a trained researcher and a pupil of an eminent professor. He has held a number of fellowships and he has performed competently several jobs of economic research. But, after this long academic preparation for what was to be a life work, it is a mystery why so little attention was given to acquiring use of simple English.

Later, when I encountered other manuscripts, I found I had been too hard on this promising Ph.D. Tone-deaf as he was to words, his report was a lighthouse of clarity among the chapters turned in by his so-called academic betters. These brethren—and sister'n—who contributed the remainder of the foundation's study were professors and assistant professors in our foremost colleges and universities. The names of one or two are occasionally in newspaper headlines. All of them had, as the professorial term has it, "published."

Anyone who edits copy, regardless of whether it is good or bad, dis

covers in a manuscript certain pet phrases, little quirks of style and other individual traits of its author. But in the series I edited, all twenty reports read alike. Their words would be found in any English dictionary, grammar was beyond criticism, but long passages in these reports demanded not editing but actual translation. For hours at a time, I floundered in brier patches like this: "In eliminating wage changes due to purely transitory conditions, collective bargaining has eliminated one of the important causes of industrial conflict, for changes under such conditions are almost always followed by a reaction when normal conditions appear."

I am not picking on my little group of social scientists. They are merely members of a caste, they are so used to taking in each other's literary washing that it has become a habit for them to clothe their thoughts in the same smothering verbal garments. Nor are they any worse than most of their colleagues, for example.

In the long run, developments in transportation, housing, optimum size of plant, etc., might tend to induce an industrial and demographic pattern similar to the one that consciousness of vulnerability would dictate. Such a tendency might be advanced by public persuasion and governmental inducement and advanced more effectively if the causes of urbanization had been carefully studied.

Such pedantic Choctaw may be all right as a sort of code language or shorthand of social science to circulate among initiates, but its perpetrators have no right to impose it on others. The tragedy is that its users appear to be under the impression that it is good English usage.

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do! There once was a time when everyday folk spoke one language, and learned men wrote another. It was called the Dark Ages. The world is in such a state that we may return to the Dark Ages if we do not acquire wisdom. If social scientists have answers to our problems yet feel under no obligation to make themselves understood, then we laymen must learn their language. This may take some practice, but practice should become perfect by following six simple rules of the guild of social science writers. Examples which I give are sound and well tested, they come from manuscripts I edited.

*Rule 1* Never use a short word when you can think of a long one. Never say "now," but "currently." It is not "soon" but "presently." You did not have "enough" but a "sufficiency." Never do you come to the "end" but to the "termination." This rule is basic.

*Rule 2* Never use one word when you can use two or more. Eschew "probably." Write, "it is improbable," and raise this to "it is not improb-

able " Then you'll be able to parlay 'probably' into "available evidence would tend to indicate that it is not unreasonable to suppose "

*Rule 3 Put one-syllable thought into polysyllabic terms* Instead of observing that a work force might be bigger and better, write, ' In addition to quantitative enlargement, it is not improbable that there is need also for qualitative improvement in the personnel of the service " If you have discovered that musicians out of practice can't hold jobs, report that "the fact of rapid deterioration of musical skill when not in use soon converts the employed into the unemployable " Resist the impulse to say that much men's clothing is machine made Put it thus ' Nearly all operations in the industry lend themselves to performance by machine, and all grades of men's clothing sold in significant quantity involve a very substantial amount of machine work "

*Rule 4 Put the obvious in terms of the unintelligible* When you write that "the product of the activity of janitors is expended in the identical locality in which that activity takes place," your lay reader is in for a time of it After an hour's puzzlement, he may conclude that janitors' sweepings are thrown on the town dump See what you can do with this "Each article sent to the cleaner is handled separately " You become a member of the guild in good standing if you put it like this "Within the cleaning plant proper the business of the industry involves several well defined processes, which, from the economic point of view, may be characterized simply by saying that most of them require separate handling of each individual garment or piece of material to be cleaned "

*Rule 5 Announce what you are going to say before you say it* This pitcher's wind up technique before hurling towards—not at—home plate has two varieties First is the quick wind up "In the following section the policies of the administration will be considered " Then you become strong enough for the contortionist wind up "Perhaps more important, therefore, than the question of what standards are in a particular case, there are the questions of the extent of observance of these standards and the methods of their enforcement ' Also you can play with reversing Rule 5 and say *what you have said after you have said it*

*Rule 6 Defend your style as "scientific"* Look down on—not up to—clear simple English Sneer at it as 'popular' Scorn it as "journalistic " Explain your failure to put more mental sweat into your writing on the ground that "the social scientists who want to be scientific believe that we can have scientific description of human behavior and trustworthy predictions in the scientific sense only as we build adequate taxonomic systems for observable phenomena and symbolic systems for the manipulation of ideal and abstract entities "

For this explanation I am indebted to Lyman Bryson in the *Saturday*

*Review of Literature* article (Oct 13, 1945) 'Writers Enemies of Social Science' Standing on ground considerably of his own choosing Mr Bryson argued against judging social science writing by literary standards

Social scientists are not criticized because they are not literary artists The trouble with social science does not lie in its special vocabulary Those words are doubtless chosen with great care The trouble is that too few social scientists take enough care with words outside their special vocabularies

It is not much to expect that teachers should be more competent in the art of explanation than those they teach Teachers of social sciences diligently try to acquire knowledge, too few exert themselves enough to impart it intelligently

Too long has this been excused as 'the academic mind' It should be called by what it is intellectual laziness and grubbymindedness

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Precisely what is Williamson attacking in the writing of social scientists?
- 2 What are the principal criticisms that Williamson makes of the manuscripts he edited?
- 3 Explain the six rules for writing like a social scientist which are listed in the essay
- 4 Why is the way a social scientist writes an important matter? Where in the article does Williamson indicate this importance?
- 5 Point out some of Williamson's sentences which are notably free of the vices he is attacking
- 6 By what device does Williamson introduce his subject? Is the introduction an integral part of the article?
- 7 In what respects does the article follow the usual pattern of the news paper editorial? (If you aren't sure what that pattern is read a few editorials and see what pattern you can discover that most of them have in common.)
- 8 How effective is the last paragraph in helping to convey the author's main point to the reader?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What do you understand by the term "academic mind"? Does it indicate approval or disapproval?
- 2 Explain in more detail than Williamson does what the functions of a good editor are Are they strictly confined to expression or do some editors influence also what is said?
- 3 What would you consider a good style of writing? What is the objection to a number of writers all writing in the same way?
- 4 How effective do you find Williamson's method of presentation? What are its strengths? Its weaknesses?
- 5 Do you agree that the quality of one's writing is an indication of the quality of one's mind? Explain

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 *The academic mind at work.*
- 2 *The function of communication in modern life*
- 3 *How I learned to write*
- 4 *Examples of good writing and what makes them good*
- 5 *My successes and failures in writing*

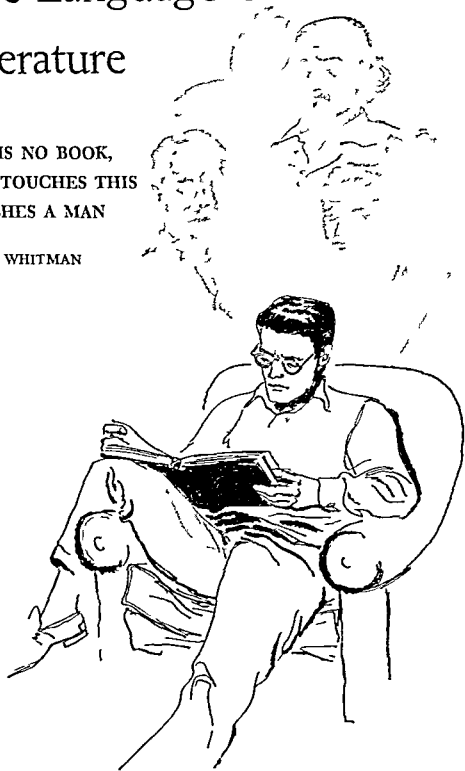
## *Chapter Four*



# The Language of Literature

THIS IS NO BOOK,  
WHO TOUCHES THIS  
TOUCHES A MAN

WALT WHITMAN



## Introduction

Everyone likes to read. In spite of the lure of television and radio, in spite of the pleasures of the movies, of bridge, and of conversation, more books are written and more are sold (and presumably read) than ever before in the history of the world. During World War II our GIs read millions of books, not counting comic books, which were the best sellers.

Not everything in print can be called literature, however, except in the broadest sense of that word. Departments of literature and language in all our colleges confine their studies to a very small proportion of the printed word, rightly believing that it is their function to acquaint the student with the best that has been thought and said, with novels, plays, and poems that are works of art, not only for the skill and power of their language, but also because of the great light which they throw upon man, his life, his problems, his society. Literature (some times even poor literature) extends our horizons, provides us with vicarious experience, helps us know ourselves and others better, and discovers values and meanings and forms in what often appears to be a chaotic and amorphous world. Reading is a valuable kind of pleasure, and the better the book we read, the greater the pleasure.

As readers, we are often concerned with what goes on in the mind of an author faced with the problem of moulding experience into language, of making real through words what is meaningful and important to him. How does the author select his episodes, the words in which he recounts them? How does he shape the language to his own purposes?

This chapter offers us a slight introduction to literature and to its language, chiefly by examining how literary works, particularly poems and novels, are composed. Three of the essays take us behind the scenes into the mind of the writer and show him at work, by anecdotes and by extended analysis. Though we may practice the writing craft at but a limited level, we can learn by inference from candid revelation and evaluation, and we can develop our critical tastes as well.

Burges Johnson, a professor with much experience in the teaching of writing, discusses in "Inspired and Uninspired Writers" a problem

that faces all writers, whether students or professionals, when meeting the task of written expression. His candid, anecdotal essay is full of suggestions for the amateur. It is an excellent illustration of the inductive approach to a problem, filled with generalizations developed from examples. His advice is precise and helpful.

Stephen Spender is one of the leading poets of the century, and his essay "The Making of a Poem" is a sensitive revelation of the poetic mind at work. The world would be richer and scholarly speculation less frequent, had more poets explained their thinking as he has his. Most of us do not think of ourselves as lovers of poetry, though we usually write some poems now and then, and popular songs are poems (usually not very good ones) and we often enjoy them. When you finish Spender's essay you will have a greater appreciation of what goes into the making of a poem, perhaps a greater appreciation of poetry, and certainly a greater appreciation of the writing process. You may be able to draw profitable conclusions for yourself.

Jean Stafford, a successful writer of novels and short stories, treats her own writing problems with honesty and sophistication in "Truth and the Novelist." Like Spender, she reveals and analyzes her methods, and there is much to learn from them. She goes more deeply into an important aesthetic question: To what extent must art reproduce the actual, the precise experience? This question is considered again by the essayists in the chapter on art. Miss Stafford's style is markedly different from Spender's, and you may find the contrast illuminating.

Virginia Woolf is more famous as a novelist than as a critic; her novels are frequently read in college courses in the novel. But she is also a distinguished critic and one of the twentieth century's masters of prose. It has long been the function of the critic, and of his lesser but better paid brother, the reviewer, to help us find our way around the library, to choose the books that are the "best," and to help us appreciate what is best in them. The critic is supposed to be a man who has accomplished what Mrs. Woolf in her essay seems to consider so nearly impossible. Without arrogance or pretension, Mrs. Woolf urges us to be our own critics. She takes for granted the pleasure of reading and shows us how it can be an even greater pleasure. Her gentle suggestions are not rules for reading, and only by implication does she

offer us any critical standards of judgment. Her essay is not a lesson in reading, but you may find it a valuable introduction to the pleasures of reading, even though not a manual for developing your own skill.

The problem of what to read faces us all, and it is further complicated by the problem of finding time to read at all. Many people feel that if they get through a daily paper, a news magazine each week, and a digest each month, they have accomplished their stint. Novels, and especially poetry, are passed up. But it is one of the functions of education to help us to learn to read more than we do. We must learn to read intelligently, to know what makes a book a work of art, for the more we know, the greater our pleasure and the richer our experience. Perhaps someday we may be able to number ourselves among Mrs. Woolf's blessed, "those who have loved reading."

## BURGES JOHNSON

born 1887 was Professor of English at Vassar and Syracuse and is now Professor Emeritus of Union College. He has also been editor, writer, and poet. His *Campus Versus Classroom* summarizes his ideas on teaching. [Inspired and Uninspired Writers, from *The Saturday Review*, April 25, 1953, reprinted by permission of the author.]

### *Inspired and Uninspired Writers*

As I hark back through fifty years of contact with groping writers in editorial offices as well as in college classrooms, I hear one phrase repeated again and again—"I'm sorry the manuscript isn't ready, but I just didn't get inspired." Youngsters facing a classroom assignment, adults striving to meet an editor's demand, apparently believe that inspiration comes from without, and at uncontrollable moments. As though a muse of poetry or drama or painting or music sits upon a pink cloud somewhere in the infinite, reaches down her delicate fingers, and touches the brow of some favored one who then proceeds to take dictation.

I am certain that this notion is a false one, and for a moment I regret I am not a psychologist, fluent in the basic English of that fraternity. For I know too that there is such a force as inspiration, but that it comes from within and not from without, and is to a great extent controllable.

In this opinion I disagree with that oracle among oracles, the *London Times*, which in a recent editorial implies that inspiration is an outer force working upon the poet's inner mind. And I disagree, too, with those pedagogues who cite against me the derivation of the word itself—"a breathing in." But if word derivation be any argument, then one cannot give a supercilious look without eyebrows or engage in trivial conversation except where three roads meet.

I was traveling in a railway coach one day with Vachel Lindsay, at a time when teaching was a new experience for me, and he was prodding me with questions about a "writing" classroom. I told him about that frequent excuse of my dilatory young writers, and asked him, by the way, whether he himself had ever been consciously inspired.

He took my question seriously. "Often and often," he replied, "if we can agree upon the meaning of the word." Then he cited this bit of personal experience. His boyhood was spent, he said, in a Midwestern city having a population more than 50 per cent Negro. His small boy playmates were mostly Negroes, and no child could have had more delightful companions. They were rollicking, imaginative, sympathetic, and loyal in their friendships. But as he grew older he became aware of

social pressures which would force him to give up these companions, and he resented the fact. Gropingly he began to philosophize about the contribution these people might make to our society in this melting pot of ours, if they were allowed to melt. He rated high their primitive simplicity, their high spirits, and their spirituality. Then he moved away from Springfield, Illinois, and other speculative fancies filled his mind.

Years afterward, so he told me, he was traveling in a Pullman car, and his mind was idle. Perhaps the rhythm of the car wheels affected him, perhaps the Pullman porter caught his attention, at any rate, he found himself humming a couplet—

Then I saw the Congo creeping through the black,  
Cutting through the forest with a golden track.

Without conscious effort he had suddenly composed what was to him a complete and satisfying poem, and it came from inside and not outside of himself. To any other person it would seem trivial and without beauty or meaning. But to him it was a condensation of all that youthful philosophizing, stored away for years in some mental compartment. "Then I saw the Congo"—all the basic savagery of a people civilized more lately than ourselves, "Through the forest with a golden track"—the light of Heaven reflected on black waters.

So then he sat him down and proceeded by sheer drudgery of composition and the techniques of the rhymster to interpret his couplet to others. The result is a poem expanded from two lines to 152 broken up into sections, "Their Basic Savagery," "Their Irrepressible High Spirits," "The Hope of their Religion." "Big black bucks in a wine barrel room, barrel house kings with feet unstable."

The poet Dante, some years before Vachel, relates this experience in a letter to a friend. For a long time he says in effect, he wanted to write poetic lines worthy of his lady love. Again and again he reviewed in his mind her various charms, but never could find a suitable approach, so finally he gave up the task as hopeless. Long afterward he was walking beside a stream, thinking of many things but not at that moment of his lady, when suddenly he found himself saying "Ladies who have experience in love, of my own lady I would sing to you." Evidently some secret compartment of his mind had continued with that task his conscious mind had abandoned, and had found a novel approach which furthered the writing of his poem.

Hamlin Garland once described to me a device he often used in his novel writing. "When the spring runs dry," he said in effect, "when I am weary of composition and empty of ideas, and especially when I come to an impasse in my narrative and do not know which way to

turn, then I stop trying I wait until I am bedded down for the night, with the light out Then I review what I have already written until sleep comes In the morning I find that some unsleeping part of my mind has gone on with the story, and the impasse has ceased to exist "

But the commonest device among experienced writers for establishing continued contact with that hidden storehouse of the mind is to form what amounts to a physical habit I recall an overnight visit to Joe Lincoln in his Hackensack home when he excused himself right after breakfast 'Mrs Lincoln will take care of you for a couple of hours,' he said 'I go to my typewriter at nine o'clock whether I feel like writing or not, or whether I have anything ready in my head to write I know when I get there it will come, and I can't afford to break the habit "

Mark Twain arrived at the same result by staying in bed in the morning, propped up for writing, and, much to the sorrow of his good wife, smoking as he wrote 'People don't bother me there and interrupt the flow of ideas If you build up a habit of writing at a certain time, the ideas get a habit of coming then "

In my young days as an assistant editor of *Everybody's Magazine* I discovered a short story in the rack of unheralded incoming manuscript which made me straighten up and shout of my discovery to my chief at his desk across the room It was a tale of childhood in a small village, and its humor and sympathetic understanding, and the narrative itself, were so far above average that it won immediate acceptance When published it brought in so many favorable comments that the magazine republished it in a small brochure

Of course, we pestered the author for more stories of the same sort and quality, but though she tried again and again nothing worthwhile resulted She had no flair for writing But that story had suddenly flowered, out of long forgotten and neglected seeds in her mind, stored there ever since her own small girlhood in a small village Some unaccustomed mood or experience had suddenly brought it to the surface She had had an inspiration "

Inspiration then, I take it, is the sudden opening of some trap door into a subliminal area of the mind, or whatever the psychologists choose this year to call it What opens that door I suspect may be any one of several things—either special pressures from within or demands from without This I do know, that the experienced artist, the so-called professional, has mastered tricks and devices for getting it open, and so brings his subconscious mind into double harness with the rest of his cranial equipment All inspired writers from Moses to Millay all inspired artists, have done no more or no less than that.

I may well bring Moses into this, for it is in connection with those an

cient preachers and authors of Holy Writ that the word "inspiration" is most commonly used. Let me condense that romantic and undying legend: the enslaved tribes, downtrodden and crushed into the very slime of ignorance, the slave mother who casts her babe into the pathway of a princess, its adoption and rearing in the palace, with patrons and teachers who put at its disposal all the wisdom and knowledge of the most civilized nation in that ancient world. Then comes the revolt of the slaves, and the young man throws in his lot with his own people. For forty years he wanders with them, finding them filthy, ignorant, unruly, and steeped in superstition. Through all that time he must have come to feel the task of leadership an utterly hopeless one.

Then, the story tells us, he left them and went up into a high mountain and communed there with Truth itself. When he came down he carried with him a compact body of social rules and regulations which form the basis even today of those codes which make orderly living possible in our human society.

The inspired writing of Moses was a concentration and essence of all that had gone into his young mind in those days of palace teaching forty years before. If to the orthodox I seem to ignore the voice of Deity dictating on that mountain top to a scribe who takes notes with mallet and chisel on tablets of stone, they should realize that the Divine plan is no less evident in the impulsive act of a slave mother and the whim of a princess.

Mastering the mechanics of any art, gaining craftsmanship by experimenting with its tricks and devices can be a real drudgery, and the more inspired the artist, the more burdensome that business may be. The musician spending half a lifetime in practice at the keyboard, the dancer who spends wearisome hours cracking his heels together in the air, the landscape painter mastering the trick of overlaying a background of white with woodland green, and then gouging vertical lines with his fingernail to make gleaming white birch trunks—each of these may find such labor burdensome.

Once in a hotel bedroom I had endured as long as I could the voice of a singer in an adjacent room doing endless arpeggios in a penetrating tenor. Finally I knocked on the wall, and a voice through the keyhole of the communicating door said, "I'm awfully sorry. I don't enjoy this any better than you do, in fact I hate it. But I've got to do it." It was thus I made the acquaintance of the famous singer I was to hear later that evening.

The literary artist often resents this drudgery of self-training to a point where the resentment becomes an inhibition. His thoughts flash through his mind with such speed that his poem or his story is dreamed to its



conclusion and his creative urge is thus satisfied, while the hand holding the pen or the fingers on the keyboard plod slowly along, far, far behind, in what seems but a wearisome repetition

The literary artist must create and master his own vocabulary. Like Humpty Dumpty he should be able to say, "When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." Or more accurately, "When I use a word it should convey to my reader just what I want it to convey, neither more nor less." For art is the record of emotional experience, and emotion has no dictionary language of its own. The dance has its vocabulary of bodily motion, painting has form and color, music has tone and tempo, pitch and volume. But the literary art must twist words out of their dictionary meanings, using them "figuratively," and borrow tone and tempo and volume from music.

And after the literary artist has become skilled in the use of certain symbols, he may find that they have lost their values and no longer communicate truthfully, just as the painter could once communicate to us a feeling of peace, security, and contentment by painting a sunlit meadow with cows knee-deep in a pool under the shade of a spreading elm, but now finds that such a picture suggests milk from contented cows. His soul revolts and he seeks new symbols, and paints a magenta cone balanced firmly upon three cerise parallelepipeds under a winged cloud, and labels it "Perfect Peace," and hopes there are those who will get the message.

Just so the poet is betrayed by clichés and worn-out figures of speech and overworked patterns of rhyme and rhythm, so he throws them away and strives through deliberate incoherence to reveal his emotional experience. Yet new painter and new poet both seek the appreciation of their convention-bound fellow men, for they attach titles to their work written in dictionary words, and set their type on rectangular pages and their paintings in rectangular frames instead of elliptical or sinuous ones, and send to galleries or to publishers, and grieve if they are not conventionally published or hung.

All outworn symbols and devices used by the artist, if set aside for a time, perhaps a decade or a century, may regain lost values. "Hiawatha" becomes outmoded, because its rhythm and its tricks of word repetition become wearisome, and parodies have cheapened it, so it is relegated to an attic shelf. A half-century hence some grandchild finds it there and wonders why he never had been told of so lovely a thing.

In the fourteenth century a poet found he could interpret his flashes of inspiration in a pattern of rhyme and rhythm as rigid as the marbles of Praxiteles—a limited number of rhyming sounds, six accented syllables to a line and just fourteen lines. Throughout six hundred years the Pe

trarchan sonnet has for short periods of time lost its power to convey love or hate or reverence or grief—and then some poet rediscovers it as a perfect device for his emotional purpose

So the literary artist must be forever "practising" That distinguished craftsman Willa Cather was experimenting with new patterns for a novel when she wrote "The Professor's House" and borrowed from symphonic music the idea of introducing a theme sharply contrasting with the preceding one, and then returning to the opening theme "The Dutch painters do much the same thing," she said, "when they paint a detailed interior scene and in it have a window which reveals a glimpse of an outside garden I wanted to see whether the form of a novel might not gain by borrowing a device from one of the other arts"

Inspiration is the sudden revealing of some possession of the mind, hidden for a time and fermented or ripened in its hiding place, suddenly upsurging and ready for immediate use Such an experience is not confined to those folk we call artists, whose stock-in trade is emotional experience Several years ago in a scientific journal an article appeared entitled "The Hunch" In it the writer asserted that science recognizes as valid and important these sudden mental regurgitations, so compact, so stenographic, that only the recipient can interpret them to others with the aid of his own awakened memory An engineer, for instance, who has worried over the bridge which must finally be built, with complications of grade and curve and difficult terrain, finally gives up the problem for a time in favor of more immediate ones Then suddenly in the middle of the night or in the middle of a dull lecture on some wholly unrelated subject he has a hunch—the bridge problem is solved

If this is what happens when one "has an inspiration," then the experience should be both commonplace and universal, and inspired writers should be numberless, were it not for the fact that there are many human beings who live without perceiving phenomena and meditating about what they perceive, or who are capable of only dulled perceptions The unstored mind can never become inspired

It is a characteristic of all artist folk that they must share the products of their creative fancy The sculptor wishes to shape his dream into a marble which will stand where all the world may see it The painter hopes to have his canvas in a frame, hung where appreciative ones may admire it He would even like to linger near by to note their reactions The dramatist and the poet are eager for the proscenium arch and the printed page Artistic genius is never wholly content with self-expression as the sole objective Even the shy maiden who locks up her emotional fancies in a diary and hides it under the handkerchiefs in a bureau drawer does

not destroy it, she preserves it for that challenging audience—her unknown future self

But inspirational flashes come up into the conscious mind so condensed and compact, so stenographic, that only the mind receiving them can interpret them to others, and the born artist who has mastered none of the techniques—who has no skill in the craft of interpretation—may be like the child born deaf, he becomes dumb as well, in both senses of the word, unless he learns to communicate somehow with others. Complete inability to interpret artistic fancies so that others may appreciate them may react upon the very ability to dream. The drabest little village is sure to have its mute inglorious Miltons, and they must number into the millions throughout this broad land, their hopes and ambition fill the coffers of correspondence courses and writers' workshops and all get-literary-quick entrepreneurs.

One Sunday in a village church the preacher suddenly roused me from a half doze by saying, 'I love a look of agony because I know it's true, men do not sham convulsions or simulate a throe.' Jingles always catch my attention, and I found myself annoyed by the faulty rhyme. Later I quoted the couplet laughingly to a friend and he said, "Yes, Emily Dickinson has a compact way of putting things, don't you think?" I cleared my throat uneasily and said, "Yes, hadn't she?" and when I got home I found it among her poems.

Later I happened to attend an amateur performance of Masfield's 'Tragedy of Nan' and thought that even the struggles of amateur players could not make it a worse play than it was. Loyalty to Masfield as a poet led me to read it at once in book form. In his preface he says that any artist at one time or another is challenged by the desire to depict humanity at its lowest level of misery, when the soul is utterly naked. He confessed that he was trying to meet this challenge.

Then I remembered that Emily Dickinson had said in a rhymed couplet just what Masfield had tried to say in many pages of prose—"I love a look of agony because I know it's true." She had jotted the thought down just as it flashed into her mind, as she had many another of her inspirational capsules, without expansion by any of the devices of the poet's craft. All her poetry is of that unexpanded sort, and those who most enjoy it do so because they themselves supply the interpretation she failed to provide, owing either to literary indolence or to lack of interest in craftsmanship. Numberless Miltons remain mute and inglorious for one or the other of those two reasons.

The intimate confessions of any successful artist writer would tell of a long ordeal by a process of trial and error leading toward the mastery of his art, and he would still be the last to assert that he had won an ulti-

e mastery But if the authentic artist ever revolts against rigorous discipline, how much greater must be the protest of those who never experience regurgitations from a subliminal storehouse, but merely to be "an author!"

In long ago summer days when I was teaching at the Bread Loaf school, a young woman asked whether she might write poetry if she ended my composition class I told her I should insist upon a certain amount of verse writing She then asked whether I would demand conventional poetic forms I explained that I should, for discipline's sake, but that after she had shown some facility she might be as free as she pleased All that I could possibly do for her would be to help her master a few techniques of writing, only God if he thought best, could make her poet She retorted sternly, 'No man shall ever dictate to me the way which my emotions find expression'

So I meekly told her that Robert Frost might be more lenient, and we went together to find him He was his usual courteous self, and instead of answering her question directly he said, 'You know, every time I play tennis I don't try to change the tennis court' When he saw that this parable did not register, he added, "I think I play better tennis because the court is there"

I don't recall what became of the young woman, but I wish I had thought to quote to her James Montgomery Flagg's comment about some verses of his own 'This isn't exactly free verse,' he said, 'but it's very inexpensive' However, I drew from Frost another treasured bit of wisdom "I think," he said in effect, "that we all inherit a sensitivity to certain tribal rhythms The poet who utilizes them gains added power to win response from his reader"

I have said that there must be many artists-at heart who experience these recurrent inspirational flashes but have none of the craftsmanship which is needed to interpret them effectively to others But, alas and alack, there are a million more who have mastered the devices and tricks of interpretation, but have nothing to interpret Their minds may have inner storerooms, but nothing is stored therein

There is so vast an increase of literacy in this country that the printed word now has a market value reaching astronomical figures Several hundred thousand people moved not so much by a desire to share some flashing glimpse of truth or beauty, but rather by a desire to get in on a good thing, ask how they too can learn to write a story and how to sell it Immediately several thousand other people offer to tell them a few simple but secret recipes at so much per recipe In every corner of this busy land there are now workshops, bureaus, advisors, agencies, and schools which promise to do the impossible, and magazine pages are filled with

their advertising. Some of them promise to create a successful author in thirty lessons, and alas they do. Now and then their teaching may have this regrettable negative effect: that some artist in embryo, experiencing an authentic resurgence, may ignore the flash because it seems to fit none of the patterns supplied by the get literary-quick schools of authorship.

Stories written by recipe get to be easier and easier to write with practice, so that the expert craftsman can turn them out by a sort of chain system of quantity production. Things which are easy to write are just as easy to read, they call for no mental effort or reader's reciprocity. One can absorb a story labeled "ten minutes reading time" in as little as four minutes flat, and then start another, until one reads along in a sort of hypnotic state, perhaps thinking about something else while reading. It is astonishing what a lot of nothing one can read today and immediately forget that one has read it.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 How do Johnson's illustrative examples contribute to his conception of inspiration?
- 2 What does Johnson mean by inspired and uninspired writers?
- 3 What advice does he offer by implication to the student writer?
- 4 This essay seems to be rambling somewhat informally. Try to detect and outline its structure.
- 5 What is Johnson's conception of the source of "inspiration" for a writer?
- 6 What does he believe is necessary in order for the writer or artist to make use of this inspiration?
- 7 What special difficulties does the artist have who works with words?
- 8 What does he think are the dangers of learning literary recipes?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What does Johnson's essay suggest to you about the best way to prepare for and write college themes?
- 2 What are the advantages of having specific literary forms to follow, such as the sonnet, the short story, the expository essay?
- 3 Do you think that self-expression in literature or other arts is hampered by having to follow more or less well recognized forms?
- 4 Do new kinds of art, such as motion pictures and radio and television plays, tend to assume definite easily recognizable forms?

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 How I developed an idea for an essay
- 2 My substitutes for inspiration.
- 3 How to avoid clichés in writing.
- 4 An example of the influence upon literature of a pattern from some other art.
- 5 Ways of discovering that one has something to write

## STEPHEN SPENDER

born 1909 is an English born poet and critic Included among his books of poetry are *Vienna*, *The Still Centre*, *Ruin and Visions*, and *Poems of Dedication* He has also written books of criticism *The Destructive Element* and *Life and the Poet* [This article is from the *Partisan Review*, Summer 1946, reprinted by permission of the author]

### *The Making of a Poem*

#### APOLOGY

It would be inexcusable to discuss my own way of writing poetry unless I were able to relate this to a wider view of the problems which poets attempt to solve when they sit down at a desk or table to write, or walk around composing their poems in their heads There is a danger of my appearing to put across my own experiences as the general rule, when every poet's way of going about his work and his experience of being a poet are different, and when my own poetry may not be good enough to lend my example any authority

Yet the writing of poetry is an activity which makes certain demands of attention on the poet and which requires that he should have certain qualifications of ear, vision, imagination, memory and so on He should be able to think in images, he should have as great a mastery of language as a painter has over his palette, even if the range of his language be very limited All this means that, in ordinary society, a poet has to adapt himself, more or less consciously, to the demands of his vocation, and hence the peculiarities of poets and the condition of inspiration which many people have said is near to madness One poet's example is only his adaptation of his personality to the demands of poetry, but if it is clearly stated it may help us to understand other poets, and even something of poetry

Today we lack very much a whole view of poetry, and have instead many one-sided views of certain aspects of poetry which have been advertised as the only aims which poets should attempt Movements such as free verse, imagism, surrealism, expressionism, personalism and so on, tend to make people think that poetry is simply a matter of not writing in metre or rhyme, or of free association, or of thinking in images, or of a kind of drawing room madness (surrealism) which corresponds to drawing room communism Here is a string of ideas Night, dark, stars, immensity, blue, voluptuous, clinging, columns, clouds, moon, sickle, harvest, vast camp fire, hell Is this poetry? A lot of strings of words almost

as simple as this are set down on the backs of envelopes and posted off to editors or to poets by the vast army of amateurs who think that to be illogical is to be poetic, with that fond question. Thus I hope that this discussion of how poets work will imply a wider and completer view of poets.

### CONCENTRATION

The problem of creative writing is essentially one of concentration, and the supposed eccentricities of poets are usually due to mechanical habits or rituals developed in order to concentrate. Concentration, of course, for the purposes of writing poetry, is different from the kind of concentration required for working out a sum. It is a focussing of the attention in a special way, so that the poet is aware of all the implications and possible developments of his idea, just as one might say that a plant was not concentrating on developing mechanically in one direction, but in many directions, towards the warmth and light with its leaves, and towards the water with its roots, all at the same time.

Schiller liked to have a smell of rotten apples, concealed beneath the lid of his desk, under his nose when he was composing poetry. Walter de la Mare has told me that he must smoke when writing. Auden drinks endless cups of tea. Coffee is my own addiction, besides smoking a great deal, which I hardly ever do except when I am writing. I notice also that as I attain a greater concentration, this tends to make me forget the taste of the cigarette in my mouth, and then I have a desire to smoke two or even three cigarettes at a time, in order that the sensation from the outside may penetrate through the wall of concentration which I have built round myself.

For goodness sake, though, do not think that rotten apples or cigarettes or tea have anything to do with the quality of the work of a Schiller, a de la Mare, or an Auden. They are a part of a concentration which has already been attained rather than the causes of concentration. De la Mare once said to me that he thought the desire to smoke when writing poetry arose from a need, not of a stimulus, but to canalize a distracting leak of his attention away from his writing towards the distraction which is always present in one's environment. Concentration may be disturbed by someone whistling in the street or the ticking of a clock. There is always a slight tendency of the body to sabotage the attention of the mind by providing some distraction. If this need for distraction can be directed into one channel—such as the odor of rotten apples or the taste of tobacco or tea—then other distractions outside oneself are put out of competition.

Another possible explanation is that the concentrated effort of writing poetry is a spiritual activity which makes one completely forget, for the

time being, that one has a body. It is a disturbance of the balance of body and mind and for this reason one needs a kind of anchor of sensation with the physical world. Hence the craving for a scent or taste or even, sometimes, for sexual activity. Poets speak of the necessity of writing poetry rather than of a liking for doing it. It is spiritual compulsion, a straining of the mind to attain heights surrounded by abysses and it cannot be entirely happy, for in the most important sense, the only reward worth having is absolutely denied. For, however confident a poet may be, he is never quite sure that all his energy is not misdirected nor that what he is writing is great poetry. At the moment when art attains its highest attainment it reaches beyond its medium of words or paints or music, and the artist finds himself realizing that these instruments are inadequate to the spirit of what he is trying to say.

Different poets concentrate in different ways. In my own mind I make a sharp distinction between two types of concentration: one is immediate and complete, the other is plodding and only completed by stages. Some poets write immediately works which, when they are written, scarcely need revision. Others write their poems by stages, feeling their way from rough draft to rough draft, until finally, after many revisions, they have produced a result which may seem to have very little connection with their early sketches.

These two opposite processes are vividly illustrated in two examples drawn from music: Mozart and Beethoven. Mozart thought out symphonies, quartets, even scenes from operas, entirely in his head—often on a journey or perhaps while dealing with pressing problems—and then he transcribed them, in their completeness, onto paper. Beethoven wrote fragments of themes in note books which he kept beside him, *working on and developing them over years*. Often his first ideas were of a clumsiness which makes scholars marvel how he could, at the end, have developed from them such miraculous results.

Thus genius works in different ways to achieve its ends. But although the Mozartian type of genius is the more brilliant and dazzling, genius, unlike virtuosity, is judged by greatness of results, not by brilliance of performance. The result must be the fullest development in a created aesthetic form of an original moment of insight, and it does not matter whether genius devotes a lifetime to producing a small result if that result be immortal. The difference between two types of genius is that one type (the Mozartian) is able to plumb the greatest depths of his own experience by the tremendous effort of a moment, the other (the Beethovenian) must dig deeper and deeper into his consciousness, layer by layer. What counts in either case is the vision which sees and pursues and attains the end, the logic of the artistic purpose.



A poet may be divinely gifted with a lucid and intense and purposive intellect, he may be clumsy and slow, that does not matter, what matters is integrity of purpose and the ability to maintain the purpose without losing oneself. Myself, I am scarcely capable of immediate concentration in poetry. My mind is not clear, my will is weak, I suffer from an excess of ideas and a weak sense of form. For every poem that I begin to write, I think of at least ten which I do not write down at all. For every poem which I do write down, there are seven or eight which I never complete.

The method which I adopt therefore is to write down as many ideas as possible, in however rough a form, in note books (I have at least twenty of these, on a shelf beside my desk, going back over fifteen years). I then make use of some of the sketches and discard others.

The best way of explaining how I develop the rough ideas which I use, is to take an example. Here is a Notebook begun in 1944. About a hundred pages of it are covered with writing, and from this have emerged about six poems. Each idea, when it first occurs is given a number. Sometimes the ideas do not get beyond one line. For example No. 3 (never developed) is the one line —

A language of flesh and roses

I shall return to this line in a few pages, when I speak of inspiration. For the moment, I turn to No. 13, because here is an idea which has been developed to its conclusion. The first sketch begins thus —

- (a) There are some days when the sea lies like a harp  
Stretched flat beneath the cliffs. The waves  
Like wires burn with the sun's copper glow  
*[all the murmuring blue  
every silent]*

Between whose spaces every image  
Of sky *[field and]* hedge and field and boat  
Dwells like the huge face of the afternoon  
*[Lies]*

When the heat grows tired the afternoon  
Out of the land may breathe a sigh  
*[Across these wires like a hand. They vibrate  
With]*  
Which moves across those wires like a soft hand  
*[Then the vibration]*  
Between whose spaces the vibration holds  
Every bird-cry, dog's bark, man shout  
And creak of rollock from the land and sky  
With all the music of the afternoon

Obviously these lines are attempts to sketch out an idea which exists clearly enough on some level of the mind where it yet eludes the attempt to state it. At this stage, a poem is like a face which one seems to be able to visualize clearly in the eye of memory, but when one examines it mentally or tries to think it out, feature by feature, it seems to fade.

The idea of this poem is a vision of the sea. The faith of the poet is that if this vision is clearly stated it will be significant. The vision is of the sea stretched under a cliff. On top of the cliff there are fields, hedges, houses. Horses draw carts along lanes, dogs bark far inland, bells ring in the distance. The shore seems laden with hedges, roses, horses and men, all high above the sea, on a very fine summer day when the ocean seems to reflect and absorb the shore. Then the small strung-out glittering waves of the sea lying under the shore are like the strings of a harp which catch the sunlight. Between these strings lies the reflection of the shore. Butterflies are wafted out over the waves, which they mistake for the fields of the chalky landscape, searching them for flowers. On a day such as this, the land, reflected in the sea, appears to enter into the sea, as though it lies under it, like Atlantis. The wires of the harp are like a seen music fusing seascape and landscape.

Looking at this vision in another way, it obviously has symbolic value. The sea represents death and eternity, the land represents the brief life of the summer and of one human generation which passes into the sea of eternity. But let me here say at once that although the poet may be conscious of this aspect of his vision, it is exactly what he wants to avoid stating, or even being too concerned with. His job is to recreate his vision, and let it speak its moral for itself. The poet must distinguish clearly in his own mind between that which most definitely must be said and that which must not be said. The unsaid inner meaning is revealed in the music and the tonality of the poem, and the poet is conscious of it in his knowledge that a certain tone of voice, a certain rhythm, are necessary.

In the next twenty versions of the poem I felt my way towards the clarification of the seen picture, the music and the inner feeling. In the first version quoted above there is the phrase in the second and third lines

The waves  
Like wires burn with the sun's copper glow

This phrase fuses the image of the sea with the idea of music, and it is therefore a key-phrase, because the theme of the poem is the fusion of the land with the sea. Here, then are several versions of these one and a quarter lines, in the order in which they were written —

- The waves are wires
- (b) Burning as with the secret song of fires
- (c) The day burns in the trembling wires  
With a vast music golden in the eyes
- (d) The day glows on its trembling wires  
Singing a golden music in the eyes
- (e) The day glows on its burning wires  
Like waves of music golden to the eyes
- (f) Afternoon burns upon its wires  
Lines of music dazzling the eyes
- (g) Afternoon gilds its tingling wires  
To a visual silent music of the eyes

In the final version, these two lines appear as in the following stanza —

- (h) There are some days the happy ocean lies  
Like an unfingered harp, below the land
- Afternoon gilds all the silent wires  
Into a burning music of the eyes
- On mirroring paths between those fine-strung fires  
The shore, laden with roses, horses, spires,  
Wanders in water, imaged above ribbed sand

### INSPIRATION

The hard work evinced in these examples, which are only a fraction of the work put into the whole poem, may cause the reader to wonder whether there is no such thing as inspiration, or whether it is merely Stephen Spender who is uninspired. The answer is that everything in poetry is work except inspiration, whether this work is achieved at one swift stroke, as Mozart wrote his music, or whether it is a slow process of evolution from stage to stage. Here again, I have to qualify the word "work," as I qualified the word "concentration" — the work on a line of poetry may take the form of putting a version aside for a few days, weeks or years, and then taking it up again, when it may be found that the line has, in the interval of time, almost rewritten itself.

Inspiration is the beginning of a poem and it is also its final goal. It is the first idea which drops into the poet's mind and it is the final idea which he at last achieves in words. In between this start and this winning post there is the hard race, the sweat and toil.

Paul Valéry speaks of the '*une ligne donnée*' of a poem. One line

is given to the poet by God or by nature, the rest he has to discover for himself

My own experience of inspiration is certainly that of a line or a phrase or a word or sometimes something still vague, a dim cloud of an idea which I feel must be condensed into a shower of words. The peculiarity of the key word or line is that it does not merely attract, as, say, the word "braggadocio" attracts. It occurs in what seems to be an active, male, germinal form as though it were the centre of a statement requiring a beginning and an end, and as though it had an impulse in a certain direction. Here are examples —

*A language of flesh and roses*

This phrase (not very satisfactory in itself) brings to my mind a whole series of experiences and the idea of a poem which I shall perhaps write some years hence. I was standing in the corridor of a train passing through the Black Country. I saw a landscape of pits and pit heads, artificial mountains, jagged yellow wounds in the earth, everything transformed as though by the toil of an enormous animal or giant tearing up the earth in search of prey or treasure. Oddly enough, a stranger next to me in the corridor echoed my inmost thought. He said "Everything there is man-made." At this moment the line flashed into my head.

*A language of flesh and roses*

The sequence of my thought was as follows: the industrial landscape which seems by now a routine and act of God which enslaves both employers and workers who serve and profit by it, is actually the expression of man's will. Men willed it to be so, and the pitheads, slagheaps and the ghastly disregard of anything but the pursuit of wealth, are a symbol of modern man's mind. In other words, the world which we create—the world of slums and telegrams and newspapers—is a kind of language of our inner wishes and thoughts. Although this is so, it is obviously a language which has got outside our control. It is a confused language, an irresponsible senile gibberish. This thought greatly distressed me, and I started thinking that if the phenomena created by humanity are really like words in a language, what kind of language do we really aspire to? All this sequence of thought flashed into my mind with the answer which came before the question: *A language of flesh and roses*.

I hope this example will give the reader some idea of what I mean by inspiration. Now the line, which I shall not repeat again, is a way of thinking imaginatively. If the line embodies some of the ideas which I have related above, these ideas must be further made clear in other lines. That is the terrifying challenge of poetry. Can I think out the logic

of images? How easy it is to explain here the poem that I would have liked to write! How difficult it would be to write it. For writing it would imply living my way through the imaged experience of all these ideas, which here are mere abstractions, and such an effort of imaginative experience requires a lifetime of patience and watching.

Here is an example of a cloudy form of thought germinated by the word *cross*, which is the key word of the poem which exists formlessly in my mind. Recently my wife had a son. On the first day that I visited her after the boy's birth, I went by bus to the hospital. Passing through the streets on the top of the bus, they all seemed very clean, and the thought occurred to me that everything was prepared for our child. Past generations have toiled so that any child born today inherits, with his generation, cities, streets, organization, the most elaborate machinery for living. Everything has been provided for him by people dead long before he was born. Then, naturally enough, sadder thoughts colored this picture for me, and I reflected how he also inherited vast maladjustments, vast human wrongs. Then I thought of the child as like a pin point of present existence, the moment incarnate, in whom the whole of the past, and all possible futures *cross*. This word *cross* somehow suggested the whole situation to me of a child born into the world and also of the form of a poem about his situation. When the word *cross* appeared in the poem, the idea of the past should give place to the idea of the future and it should be apparent that the *cross* in which present and future meet is the secret of an individual human existence. And here again, the unspoken secret which lies beyond the poem, the moral significance of other meanings of the word "cross" begins to glow with its virtue that should never be said and yet should shine through every image in the poem.

This account of inspiration is probably weak beside the accounts that other poets might give. I am writing of my own experience, and my own inspiration seems to me like the faintest flash of insight into the nature of reality beside that of other poets whom I can think of. However, it is possible that I describe here a kind of experience which, however slight it may be, is far truer to the real poetic experience than Aldous Huxley's account of how a young poet writes poetry in his novel *Time Must Have a Stop*. It is hard to imagine anything more self-conscious and unpoetic than Mr. Huxley's account.

### MEMORY

If the art of concentrating in a particular way is the discipline necessary for poetry to reveal itself, memory exercised in a particular way is the natural gift of poetic genius. The poet, above all else, is a person who never forgets certain sense-impressions which he has experienced

and which he can re live again and again as though with all their original freshness

All poets have this highly developed sensitive apparatus of memory, and they are usually aware of experiences which happen to them at the earliest age and which retain their pristine significance throughout life. The meeting of Dante and Beatrice when the poet was only nine years of age is the experience which became a symbol in Dante's mind around which the *Divine Comedy* crystallized. The experience of nature which forms the subject of Wordsworth's poetry was an extension of a childhood vision of 'natural presences' which surrounded the boy Wordsworth. And his decision in later life to live in the Lake District was a decision to return to the scene of these childhood memories which were the most important experiences in his poetry. There is evidence for the importance of this kind of memory in all the creative arts and the argument certainly applies to prose which is creative. Sir Osbert Sitwell has told me that his book *Before the Bombardment* which contains an extremely civilized and satiric account of the social life of Scarborough before and during the last war, was based on his observations of life in that resort before he had reached the age of twelve.

It therefore is not surprising that although I have no memory for telephone numbers, addresses, faces and where I have put this morning's correspondence, I have a perfect memory for the sensation of certain experiences which are crystallized for me around certain associations. I could demonstrate this from my own life by the overwhelming nature of associations which suddenly aroused have carried me back so completely into the past, particularly into my childhood, that I have lost all sense of the present time and place. But the best proofs of this power of memory are found in the odd lines of poems written in note books fifteen years ago. A few fragments of unfinished poems enable me to enter immediately into the experiences from which they were derived, the circumstances in which they were written and the unwritten feelings in the poem that were projected but never put into words.

Knowledge of a full sun  
That runs up his big sky above  
The hill then in those trees and throws  
His smiling on the turf

That is an incomplete idea of fifteen years ago and I remember exactly a balcony of a house facing a road and on the other side of the road pine trees beyond which lay the sea. Every morning the sun sprang up first of all above the horizon of the sea then it climbed to the tops of the trees and shone on my window. And this memory connects with the sun that shines through my window in London now in spring and early summer.

So that the memory is not exactly a memory. It is more like one prong upon which a whole calendar of similar experiences happening throughout years collect. A memory once clearly stated ceases to be a memory, it becomes perpetually present, because every time we experience something which recalls it, the clear and lucid original experience imposes its formal beauty on the new experiences. It is thus no longer a memory but an experience lived through again and again.

Turning over these old note books, my eye catches some lines, in a projected long poem, which immediately re-shape themselves into the following short portrait of a woman's face —

Her eyes are gleaming fish  
Caught in her nervous face, as if in a net  
Her hair is wild and fair, haloing her cheeks  
Like a fantastic flare of Southern sun  
There is madness in her cherishing her children  
Sometimes perhaps a single time in years,  
Her wandering fingers stoop to arrange some flowers—  
Then in her hands her whole life stops and weeps

It is perhaps true to say that memory is the faculty of poetry, because the imagination itself is an exercise of memory. There is nothing we imagine which we do not already know. And our ability to imagine is our ability to remember what we have already once experienced and to apply it to some different situation. Thus the greatest poets are those with memories so great that they extend beyond their strongest experiences to their minutest observations of people and things far outside their own self-centredness (the weakness of memory is its self-centredness hence the narcissistic nature of most poetry).

Here I can detect my own greatest weakness. My memory is defective and self-centred. I lack the confidence in using it to create situations outside myself, although I believe that, in theory, there are very few situations in life which a poet should not be able to imagine, because it is a fact that most poets have experienced almost every situation in life. I do not mean by this that a poet who writes about a Polar Expedition has actually been to the North Pole. I mean, though, that he has been cold, hungry, etc., so that it is possible for him by remembering imaginatively his own felt experiences to know what it is like to explore the North Pole. That is where I fail. I cannot write about going to the North Pole.

#### FAITH

It is evident that a faith in their vocation, mystical in intensity, sustains poets. There are many illustrations from the lives of poets to show this, and Shakespeare's sonnets are full of expressions of his faith in the immortality of his lines.

From my experience I can clarify the nature of this faith. When I was nine, we went to the Lake District, and there my parents read me some of the poems of Wordsworth. My sense of the sacredness of the task of poetry began then, and I have always felt that a poet's was a sacred vocation, like a saint's. Since I was nine, I have wanted to be various things, for example, Prime Minister (when I was twelve). Like some other poets I am attracted by the life of power and the life of action, but I am still more repelled by them. Power involves forcing oneself upon the attention of historians by doing things and occupying offices which are, in themselves, important, so that what is truly powerful is not the soul of a so-called powerful and prominent man but the position which he fills and the things which he does. Similarly, the life of "action" which seems so very positive is, in fact, a selective, even a negative kind of life. A man of action does one thing or several things because he does not do something else. Usually men who do very spectacular things fail completely to do the ordinary things which fill the lives of most normal people, and which would be far more heroic and spectacular perhaps if they did not happen to be done by many people. Thus in practice the life of action has always seemed to me an act of cutting oneself off from life.

Although it is true that poets are vain and ambitious, their vanity and ambition is of the purest kind attainable in this world, for the saint renounces ambition. They are ambitious to be accepted for what they ultimately are as revealed by their inmost experiences, their finest perceptions, their deepest feelings, their uttermost sense of truth, in their poetry. They cannot cheat about these things, because the quality of their own being is revealed not in the noble sentiments which their poetry expresses, but in sensibility, control of language, rhythm and music, things which cannot be attained by a vote of confidence from an electorate, or by the office of Poet Laureate. Of course, work is tremendously important, but, in poetry, even the greatest labor can only serve to reveal the intrinsic qualities of soul of the poet as he really is.

Since there can be no cheating, the poet, like the saint, stands in all his works before the bar of a perpetual day of judgment. His vanity of course is pleased by success, though even success may contribute to his understanding that popularity does not confer on him the favorable judgment of all the ages which he seeks. For what does it mean to be praised by one's own age, which is soaked in crimes and stupidity, except perhaps that future ages, wise where we are foolish, will see him as a typical expression of this age's crimes and stupidity? Nor is lack of success a guarantee of great poetry, though there are some who pretend that it is. Nor can the critics, at any rate beyond a certain limited point of technical judgment, be trusted.



The poet's faith is therefore, firstly, a mystique of vocation, secondly, a faith in his own truth, combined with his own devotion to a task. There can really be no greater faith than the confidence that one is doing one's utmost to fulfill one's high vocation, and it is this that has inspired all the greatest poets. At the same time this faith is coupled with a deep humility because one knows that, ultimately, judgment does not rest with oneself. All one can do is to achieve nakedness, to be what one is with all one's faculties and perceptions, strengthened by all the skill which one can acquire, and then to stand before the judgment of time.

In my note books, I find the following Prose Poem, which expresses these thoughts

Bring me peace bring me power bring me assurance Let me reach the bright day, the high chair, the plain desk, where my hand at last controls the words, where anxiety no longer undermines me. If I don't reach these I'm thrown to the wolves, I'm a restless animal wandering from place to place, from experience to experience.

Give me the humility and the judgment to live alone with the deep and rich satisfaction of my own creating not to be thrown into doubt by a word of spite or disapproval.

In the last analysis don't mind whether your work is good or bad so long as it has the completeness, the enormity of the whole world which you love.

### SONG

Inspiration and song are the irreducible final qualities of a poet which make his vocation different from all others. Inspiration is an experience in which a line or an idea is given to one, and perhaps also a state of mind in which one writes one's best poetry. Song is far more difficult to define. It is the music which a poem as yet unthought of will assume, the empty womb of poetry for ever in the poet's consciousness, waiting for the fertilizing seed.

Sometimes, when I lie in a state of half-waking half-sleeping, I am conscious of a stream of words which seem to pass through my mind, without their having a meaning, but they have a sound, a sound of passion, or a sound recalling poetry that I know. Again sometimes when I am writing, the music of the words I am trying to shape takes me far beyond the words, I am aware of a rhythm, a dance, a fury, which is as yet empty of words.

In these observations, I have said little about headaches, midnight oil, pints of beer or of claret, love affairs, and so on, which are supposed to be stations on the journeys of poets through life. There is no doubt that writing poetry, when a poem appears to succeed, results in an intense physical excitement, a sense of release and ecstasy. On the other hand,

I dread writing poetry, for, I suppose, the following reasons a poem is a terrible journey, a painful effort of concentrating the imagination, words are an extremely difficult medium to use, and sometimes when one has spent days trying to say a thing clearly one finds that one has only said it dully, above all, the writing of a poem brings one face to face with one's own personality with all its familiar and clumsy limitations. In every other phase of existence, one can exercise the orthodoxy of a conventional routine one can be polite to one's friends, one can get through the day at the office, one can pose, one can draw attention to one's position in society, one is—in a word—dealing with men. In poetry, one is wrestling with a god.

Usually, when I have completed a poem, I think "this is my best poem," and I wish to publish it at once. This is partly because I only write when I have something new to say, which seems more worth while than what I have said before, partly because optimism about my present and future makes me despise my past. A few days after I have finished a poem, I relegate it to the past of all my other wasted efforts, all the books I do not wish to open.

Perhaps the greatest pleasure I have got from poems that I have written is when I have heard some lines quoted which I have not at once recognized. And I have thought 'how good and how interesting,' before I have realized that they are my own.

In common with other creative writers I pretend that I am not, and I am, exceedingly affected by unsympathetic criticism, whilst praise usually makes me suspect that the reviewer does not know what he is talking about. Why are writers so sensitive to criticism? Partly, because it is their business to be sensitive, and they are sensitive about this as about other things. Partly, because every serious creative writer is really in his heart concerned with reputation and not with success (the most successful writer I have known, Sir Hugh Walpole, was far and away the most unhappy about his reputation, because the 'highbrows' did not like him). Again, I suspect that every writer is secretly writing for *someone*, probably for a parent or teacher who did not believe in him in childhood. The critic who refuses to 'understand' immediately becomes identified with this person, and the understanding of many admirers only adds to the writer's secret bitterness if this one refusal persists.

Gradually one realizes that there is always this someone who will not like one's work. Then, perhaps, literature becomes a humble exercise of faith in being all that one can be in one's art, of being more than oneself, expecting little, but with a faith in the mystery of poetry which gradually expands into a faith in the mysterious service of truth.

Yet what failures there are! And how much mud sticks to one, mud

not thrown by other people but acquired in the course of earning one's living answering or not answering the letters which one receives, supporting or not supporting public causes. All one can hope is that this mud is composed of little grains of sand which will produce pearls.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What does Spender mean by "thinking in images"?
- 2 Why has he called his first section "Apology"?
- 3 Compare Spender's conception of inspiration with Johnson's.
- 4 What principal steps does Spender follow in the writing of a poem?
- 5 Spender develops his essay by definition of six key terms. What are the particular characteristics of each? How does he illustrate the meaning of each?
- 6 What characteristics of poetry are useful for a freshman writer to incorporate in his compositions now and then?
- 7 How does Spender relate the sections of his essay to one another?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Why do you think poetry was much more popular in the past?
- 2 What values have you found in the reading of poetry?
- 3 What is your conception of modern poetry? In what ways does it seem similar to modern art, or to music?
- 4 Could you justify the statement that poetry (good and bad) still plays an important role in contemporary society?
- 5 Does Spender's description of how a poem is made change your attitude toward poets and poetry in any way?
- 6 Why should anyone read what a critic has to say about poetry or any other work of art?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Defend or refute the thesis that everyone should read some poetry regularly.
- 2 My favorite poem (or poet).
- 3 The man of thought and the man of action in today's world.
- 4 The relative values of poetry and fiction.

## JEAN STAFFORD

born 1915 is an American novelist and short story writer Besides contributing short stories to *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and other magazines she has published two novels *Boston Adventure* and *The Mountain Lion* [ *Truth and the Novelist*, from *Harper's Bazaar*, August 1954, reprinted by permission of the author ]

### *Truth and the Novelist*

There are certain questions that nonwriters cannot resist putting to writers At the beginning of the conversation, the nonwriter, having been warned by his hostess of the business of his interlocutor, says, "Do you write under your own name?" as if the profession, especially for women, were even now regarded as daring and disreputable as in the days when Edith Wharton, still known as Pussy Jones, shocked all of Newport by publishing a book of poems at almost the same time that she was presented to society The question, to be sure, is asked because the nonwriter has never heard of the writer and hopes for a clue, but one is tempted sometimes to reply, "No, I call myself Charles Dickens " I myself have been taken several times for a Miss Stafford who writes a newspaper column on matters pertaining to health and for another Miss Stafford who is an analyst of handwriting, and many people have thrilled to meet me as the Miss Stafford who sings and who they never dreamed wrote novels as well It is usually established next whether one writes poetry or prose and afterward the nonwriter inquires, "And what kind of novels are they? Are they love stories or whodunits?" This question has always flummoxed me, and I have never found a satisfactory answer to it since I do not know what hard and fast category into which to put myself I sidle out of that one and then am confronted with, "Where do you get your plots? Do you make them up or do you take them from real life?" Or I am posed this favorite, "Doesn't everyone clam up when you come into a room for fear you'll put 'em in a book?" For it is generally felt that the writer of fiction is a clever and deadly enemy, armed with the most treacherous of weapons and ready to lampoon his friends and relatives at the slightest provocation, some people, as a result, do genuinely fear and hate us, but more, while protesting the opposite, long to find themselves masquerading in our make believe And we are often invited to expose the secrets of a life whose owner, for reasons of security, cannot expose himself Not long ago, I had a letter from a woman in Michigan who, stating perfunctorily that she had read one of my books, went on to say,

"I've always wanted to write a book but haven't the knack. However, I do have a plot that someone could make into a wonderful book if you would like to write a book that has real spice. I have lots of reason for not wanting anyone to know that it is my life but I was once really attractive to men and always had at least three in love with me at once. Now I've settled down and am living a quiet life. I have seven children. People who know only a few of the real facts have told me a book of my life would sell like fury. If you are interested I will sell it to you and make arrangements to see you if you could come here and I'd have to have your word for it no one would know it was my story. You could make a fortune and become really famous. I can tell you in one day and night all the real facts."

And in a postscript she added pressingly, "I'll only be at this address for one month so please let me know right away if interested. If not, I'll write someone else who may take this deal."

Her imminent decampment for parts unknown—though she had professed to be settled down and living quietly with her brood of seven—together with the word *deal* which I mistrust except as it is used in a game of cards, gave me the uneasy impression that she had been hawking her wares for years and had had to move on periodically like the unlicensed sellers of walking dolls and hand-painted neckties on the streets of New York. I did not accept the invitation to travel to Michigan and there to listen for twenty-four hours to the roll call of her old flames, feeling, perhaps unreasonably, that this would not be my style, just as Eudora Welty once refused an opportunity to listen to one hundred fishing anecdotes, the repertory of someone else who didn't have the knack. I have no doubt that the sweetheart of Michigan *had* spent an interesting life—clearly it had been a busy one—but to the imaginative writer, nearly all lives are interesting, all are raw material for fiction, so I saved the train fare and worried along with some other "real spice" that I had on hand.

The most interesting lives of all, of course, are our own and there is nothing egomaniacal nor unmannerly in our being keenly concerned with what happens to us, if we did not firmly believe that ours are the most absorbing experiences and the most acute perceptions, and the most compelling human involvements, we would be no writers at all and we would, as well, be very dull company. But it is not fair to buttonhole our reader with an eregesis of ourselves if there is the slightest risk of his being bored or embarrassed or offended, and while I have no objection to the use of autobiography—for in a sense all writing is of necessity autobiographical—I should counsel any beginner to winnow carefully and to add a good portion of lies, the bigger the better. Too great an ad-

diction to the truth is a hindrance to any writer, and I think with terrible pity of a minor lady poet in Ohio who is not capable of so much as a fib. In a long narrative poem called *A Trek Through Florida*, which recounts a trip she made by Greyhound bus with her sister, she says that they set forth one evening to see the planes take off at Pensacola, but after the reader has danced a while with excitement in his anticipation of the spectacle, he is dismayed to find that because of bad weather, there is no activity on the flying field at all and he has to get right back in the bus. This is to me the most frustrating poem in the English language, even worse than the couplet composed by the same puritanical truth teller,

Then why should I not love him, my father and my chum?

I don't think there's more just like him, but there may be some

When I was young, I had the fortune and the pleasure of talking from time to time with Ford Madox Ford who, with the generosity that made him beloved of his pupils, read and commented on my aimless and plotless short stories and on inchoate chapters of novels that were destined to die unborn. One time, in appraising a character he found disproportionately unsympathetic, he asked me how closely I had drawn the portrait from life, and when I replied that I had been as sedulous as I knew how, he said, "That's impolite and it's not fiction." He went on to observe then that the better one knows one's characters in life, the harder it is to limn them in fiction because one has too much material, there are too many facets to tell the truth about, there are whole worlds of inconsistencies and variants, and objectivity will fade when one's personal attitude is permitted excessive prominence. It is the business of the reader, not of the author, to sit in judgment, the author is not allowed to say, "This man is a villain and you must believe me because I have known him all my life." Unless you show forth his iniquities, the reader may not find him iniquitous at all, not knowing that he sent the author a nasty comic valentine in the fourth grade.

I took Ford's advice very much to heart and subsequently I found that I could transform experience into artistic substance by the simplest expedients—by shifting the scene from the North to the South or from the East to the West, by changing the occupation of a character or the color of his hair or the fit of his clothes. In his mythical environment and with his new lineaments and his unfamiliar wardrobe, my acquaintance was presently easy to handle.

And then, after years of attacking from ambush and throwing up smoke screens, I made the same tactical error I had made in the beginning, and did so unconsciously. It is my intention to tell you about this, a problem completely autobiographical. I am no teacher and I could not teach anyone the first thing about writing, the most I can do is to seek

my own creed in the conclusions I hope to draw from this rather depressing and instructive story. The creed is different from the one I held ten years ago and I dare say it is different from the one I shall hold ten years hence. All the imponderables that play upon us, the state of the world, the intellectual fashions of our times, our personal triumphs and misfortunes, our reading and our writing itself slowly shift the emphasis of our beliefs. But one of the greatest blessings of all to a fiction writer is that he may change his mind and never be called a turncoat.

My story begins in Cambridge, Massachusetts, one evening in 1946 when two poets and I were exchanging memories of life in the thirties. We were coevals and we had had the same frame of reference. I told them an intricate tale of an act of violence in which I had been peripherally involved when I was in college, I had been witness to a suicide that had come at the end of a spectacularly ugly life, but one so illustrative of the middle years of the decade that my description of it sounded like an old lecture on the manners and the morals of those days. The actions were motivated by the dislocations of the twenties that had still not been set right, by the depression, by the end of prohibition, by the New Deal. It involved that famous song of our times "Gloomy Sunday" that was said to have started an epidemic of suicide amongst college students all over the world, the game Monopoly figured in it and the Young Communist League, *Ulysses*, the undergraduate vogue of swallowing goldfish and the world-wide furor caused by the birth of the Dionne quintuplets. It concerned a boy who had sat next to me in Latin Comedy and had made a tolerable sum of pocket money for himself by renting out, at a dollar and a half a day, an unexpurgated copy of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* which he had smuggled in from France on a tramp steamer. Because in that region there was still local option and our town was dry, there was, in my story, a bootlegger who kept his pints of filmy booze hidden from the revenue officers under a manure pile in his back yard. There were medical students who went on ether jags, chemistry students who stole grain alcohol from the laboratory and made bathtub gin in milk bottles for consumption at the Junior Prom, professors who were open advocates of the U S S R and were neither questioned nor shunned, sophomore firebrands who were later to go to the Spanish Revolution with the International Brigade, and German exchange students who created incidents in classes in political economy. Just as important were the omissions: anti-Semitism was not yet a major issue nor had the Catholic Church begun to attract intellectual converts in any number, a postgraduate year in Germany was still the ambition of many, and the vocabulary of psychiatry was not universal. (How the times have changed! Not long ago a taxi driver in New York, transporting me a mortally long distance,

told me in meticulous detail all he had discussed that morning with his analyst. He assured me that he was not a nut but if he were, he would be diagnosed as a manic-depressive.)

But in addition to its being typical of our generation, my story had universal elements and an urgent drama and compelling implications. And when I had finished with my recital, my friends said that I must write it down, that it was obviously my next novel and that it was, so to speak, ready-made. I should write it, they said, just as I had told it to them. I was then close to the end of my second book and was casting about for a new subject, and since I respected the taste and the wisdom of the poets, I decided to follow their suggestion and a few months later began my novel about college life in the thirties and the shocking event that had altered the whole course of my existence and had loitered horribly as a nightmare for eleven years. At this point I should say that five years before that evening in Cambridge and six years after I had seen a life go up in gun smoke, I had written the whole thing down in a long story which was a failure since I did not know what it was about and had no idea what my own feeling toward the characters in it was. But in 1946 I believed that by this time the emotional experience had sunk deeply enough to rise again as literary experience and now that the immediacy was removed, I could examine its components judiciously and disclose its meanings. I had been so out of touch with all the people who had been involved that I was certain I could create them out of whole cloth.

But from the very start I faced more perplexing problems than ever before in my life. They stemmed partly from the fact that I had told the story and that afterward, in many conversations with my friends, I talked still more of it. This was an infraction of what should be one of the cardinal rules of writing: keep your mouth shut about work in progress. But my troubles went deeper: the matter was extremely personal and interior and was, I discovered, quite as painful in recollection as it had been in its genesis when I watched the death throes of a tormented human being. I found that I had, after all, *not* forgotten the people I had known then, and I reproduced all the miseries of those days with pitiless accuracy. I am reminded here of another occasion on which I wrote directly out of my own life, I wrote a story about an automobile accident I had been in, in which my skull had been fractured and my nose had been smashed to smithereens. In describing the pain that assailed my heroine, I so perfectly revived my own old pain that each time I sat down at my typewriter I acquired a shattering headache that no amount of aspirin could cure. But that was only a physical distress, and the canvas I had set out to cover was not a large one.



I fancy that in the next three and a half years, as I worked on the suicide story, I accumulated twenty pounds of manuscript and destroyed an equal amount. I completed two versions, one in the first person and one in the third, I tried and rejected the omniscient observer, I made an effort to imitate Dostoevski's method in *The Brothers Karamazov*, the use of a fellow citizen to record the lives of the principals. By actual count, I wrote twenty three versions of the first chapter with twenty-three different accentuations. But the book continued to be a mess, heavy, flat, oppressively factual and cumbrously emotional. Something ailed my prose and all my rhythms were off, it was as if I had been cut off from language and from tone and mood and from the understanding of the simplest methods of composition. I was writing about people I knew as well as I knew myself, about a setting that was as immediately before my senses as the room in which I sat at my typewriter, about a sequence of events that I had thought about and talked about a hundred times. And even so, every page, every sentence, bore the signature of a prevaricator. I told lies right and left not only about my characters but about humanity in general, but they were not good lies, they were pedestrian, malicious and transparent.

The clever reasons why I could not progress in the book varied as I thought them up. College was too remote from me, I claimed, so I went for some months to Columbia to study botany, and I became so absorbed by what I saw under my microscope that I arrived at the laboratory bright and early every morning and came home at sundown. I was persuaded that my study would have a double function, not only would I redeem the sense of campus life but I might acquire the levelheaded objectivity of a scientist. But I saw no students. I was instructed by a geneticist in his own laboratory, and I saw him and his companions who were breeding mice with tails like bolts of lightning and mice that danced in circles counterclockwise. I learned a good deal about botany and something about genetics and about the jokes that make scientists laugh, but these acquisitions did not further the project on my desk at home.

I hit upon another explanation. The fault lay in my residence in New York, an improbable place for a writer, and although this I do believe is true, moving out of the city would not have solved the problem, anyhow, at that time, it was impossible. However, this gave me an excuse to study brochures issued by real estate brokers advertising country properties and to acquaint myself thoroughly with the rural regions of Ireland described for me in exuberant guidebooks. To escape the noise of my apartment building where, below me, there was a music school for children who ceaselessly practiced the piccolo obbligato from "The Stars and Stripes Forever," I used to go with my notebooks to a small private

library, thinking that in the luxurious quiet there I would come to terms with the book. But I tended rather to come to terms with the books Mrs Wharton had written than with the one I had not. Occasionally I spent whole mornings at the zoo in Central Park communing with Joe the chimpanzee who smokes cigars and sometimes strolls in a sailor suit, hand in hand with his keeper. Frequently I walked across Brooklyn Bridge and I closely studied the motley buildings of Welfare Island from a bench on the East River Drive. I took sight-seeing boats around the island of Manhattan and I lunched one Saturday in Hoboken where, in a single block, I counted twenty-two saloons. In the worst periods of guilt I consoled myself by saying that all this was grist to the mill and that in time I would make use of the sights and sounds and smells in these byways of the city. There were sometimes stretches when I wrote for ten hours a day, but these were followed by long intervals when I avoided the sight of the manuscripts on my desk as if they were the source of a physical pain and I fled my rooms, seeking a fresh affection but firmly convinced that I was really looking for a way to write this novel which had been scheduled for publication numerous times. I set deadlines for myself and I had my publisher set deadlines for me. The light at my desk was bad, so I had lengthy consultations with people who might remedy it. I was distracted by the piccolos, by dogs that barked and babies that howled, by the cocktail parties I went to and the ones I did not go to but heard about. Probably the most ingenious of my escapes was this. I declined an advance from my publisher and therefore, in order to live, I was obliged to write short stories and articles which naturally consumed my time and claimed my attention. Then my apartment began to depress and confine me, and I moved to another so much costlier that I had to spend even longer hours on earning my bread and butter. Pervading all these troubled months was the deep sense that whatever gift I once had had was gone forever.

A few days before last Christmas, on an afternoon after a morning when I started on page one again for the twenty-fourth time, the reason I could not write the novel dawned upon me. It was ever so simple. I hated my material. The years I had elected to write about had not been happy ones for me nor for any of my characters and we emerged, in my merciless pages, unappealing to a degree in our melancholy, humorless, morbid, self seeking, unworthy of any but the dreary fates I meted out to us. I had used my old tricks: had elongated people who in real life were short, had turned men into women and professors into priests, had stricken hale men with heart disease and had invested imbeciles with erudition. But while the disguises might have fooled my readers, they did not take me in for a minute, and behind the fake mustaches and the

plaster noses, the wigs, the wooden legs and bogus passports, I saw my friends and foes and kinsmen. But most of all, I saw my own ubiquitous self, practicing ventriloquism to no purpose. I was everywhere hampered by my irrational feeling that I must not alter the facts, that I must tell the truth and, moreover, tell nothing *but* the truth, that every act must come in its proper chronological order, as the poets had said, it was as if I were making a confession to a jury upon which my very life depended. I rifled through the enormous pile of typewritten paper and concluded that every page of it was bad. Whether the architecture of the book and the prose of it and its conception were really as bad as I judged them to be, I shall probably never know, but my own dislike of it was sufficient, I realized that I would never publish it no matter how I treated it in its final version.

In this conviction on that bright day I burned it up, leaving no word of it behind. As the last feather of smoke curled up my chimney, I underwent a severe shock that lasted for several days. But when it had passed, I knew from the joyous state of my mind that I had performed one of the most sensible acts of my life. There came to me the realization that for all these fruitless months I had been the victim of a delusion, I had believed that because the events of my story had been important to me and had enormously influenced my thought and my behavior, they were therefore of literary use and significance. I had felt that I *must* write it down, that I *must* make this explanation of myself as a specimen of my generation in the formative years. There is a belief held by many that every novelist has in him one book that is more particularly *his* book than any other, that in it he will reveal the quintessence of his talent. *The Sun Also Rises* is probably Hemingway's and *The Great Gatsby* is Fitzgerald's. This may be true for every writer and it may not be, but of one thing I am certain that book evolves as naturally as does any other and it is not possible to say, as the poets urged me to say before I started to compose, "This is my testament. Here will be the crystallization of what I, as a writer, want to say." And further, I do not believe that this book must necessarily be the most autobiographical. I remembered, as I glanced once at the pile of ashes in my grate, that twice before I had destroyed completed novels. They, too, had dealt with signal happenings in my life and they, too, had been seen unclearly through a cloud of emotion, I had destroyed them for the same reason, that I had disliked my data, had been more personally omnipresent than coolly omniscient, and that in failing to please myself I failed equally to please my reader. As it happens those books, written a good many years ago, were predicated on principles and prejudices that I have long since repudiated, and I am frank to admit that I would be ashamed if they existed now between a publisher's terribly

durable covers. The ending of this story is a very happy one. About a week after the fire I began to write a brand new novel, one that had been at the back of my mind, tantalizing me all the time that I had been harrassed by the other. It deals with people I have never met and with a permutation of circumstances that has no counterpart in my own life, and it is set in a part of the world that bewitches me. (I had always quarreled with the landscape of the other.) I am not required to resuscitate any black humors and therefore to suffer them again, and because my protagonist is not myself, I am kindly and uninhibited. I have no need to settle scores with any of my characters and therefore have no fear of hurting anyone's feelings if I make him base when it suits my purpose or absurd when it suits my mood. Above all, I am freed of the crippling tendency to tell the truth. I'll make those planes take off at Pensacola even if there is a hurricane and every last one of the pilots is dead drunk.

I do not advocate the rejection of experience, for if I did and practiced what I preached, I would have to stop writing tomorrow. But I do argue long and loud against the case history and particularly the case history that is long on psychological analysis and short on action and plot. I don't like to read intimate facts that are none of my business, and I blush darkly in the presence of a flagellant who whips himself for his private sins with the terms he borrows from the doctors. There are times when I wish we might return to the reticence of my parents' era when people kept their secrets, sinners might beat their breasts and scream out their trespasses at revival meetings, but one didn't meet those people socially, now, they are on hand at every cocktail party, fresh from the analyst's couch. It was perhaps ridiculous and I dare say it was sometimes unkind to hide away relatives of unsound mind in upper bedrooms, but still that seems to me more becoming than to brag in public about the lunatic heritage that can explain our own misdeeds.

You could justly accuse me of disobeying my own rules, for certainly I have revealed myself to you in a very private dilemma, and you know how much time I have wasted and you know that I live in the primate house and have a predilection for amassing useless information about saloons in Hoboken. The small advice I offer is this: take with a grain of salt the cliché that it is possible to rid oneself of a grief or a guilt or an ugly memory by writing of it. If you write of yourself, write with compassion and lay the blame for setting the house on fire on someone else. If the story is intolerable to you or boring or disgusting, the chances are that is how it will strike your reader. Don't talk your story away, not even to a publisher who gives you a long expensive lunch at the Ritz. And unless you thought of it first, don't let anyone, not even a brace of poets, tell you what to write. But above all, if you have committed every

folly and broken every rule in the book, don't be afraid to give up. When the labors of three years and a half went up the chimney and out to mingle with the atmosphere of New York, I felt in control of my own bailiwick again now that the intruder, that rabid devotee of truth, was banished.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What is the advantage of Miss Stafford's informal, personal approach to her subject?
2. For what reasons does Miss Stafford say that "too great an addiction to truth is a hindrance to any writer"?
3. What were some of the difficulties she encountered in trying to make a novel from real experiences with which she was familiar?
4. What reasons does she give for finally abandoning the novel that would not come out right?
5. What is her final answer to the problem that was raised by her lack of success with the novel she tried to write?
6. In what ways can a novel be more informative and effective than a work of non fiction?
7. Miss Stafford and Mrs. Woolf are both successful novelists. What elements of their style tend to prove this?
8. What is the significance of Miss Stafford's statement that "It is the business of the reader, not the author, to sit in judgment"?
9. Summarize in one sentence Miss Stafford's principal idea.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do you think are the chief reasons why people are interested in learning how writers do their work?
2. Can you deduce from Miss Stafford's experience any general principles about the attitude one ought to have toward his work?
3. If literal truth to fact, or something like it, is probably not useful material for the novelist, is there some other kind of truth that the novelist can usefully employ?

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. An experience of mine transformed into fiction
2. Truth is (or is not) stranger than fiction
3. Fiction vs. fact
4. Why I would (or would not) like to be a writer
5. The novel that has most influenced me
6. I know ——— (character in a novel) better than I know most of my friends

is right that each should give us. Yet few people ask from books what books can give us. Most commonly we come to books with blurred and divided minds, asking of fiction that it shall be true, of poetry that it shall be false, of biography that it shall be flattering, of history that it shall enforce our own prejudices. If we could banish all such preconceptions when we read, that would be an admirable beginning. Do not dictate to your author, try to become him. Be his fellow-worker and accomplice. If you hang back, and reserve and criticise at first, you are preventing yourself from getting the fullest possible value from what you read. But if you open your mind as widely as possible, then signs and hints of almost imperceptible fineness, from the twist and turn of the first sentences, will bring you into the presence of a human being unlike any other. Steep yourself in this, acquaint yourself with this, and soon you will find that your author is giving you, or attempting to give you, something far more definite. The thirty-two chapters of a novel—if we consider how to read a novel first—are an attempt to make something as formed and controlled as a building, but words are more impalpable than bricks, reading is a longer and more complicated process than seeing. Perhaps the quickest way to understand the elements of what a novelist is doing is not to read, but to write, to make your own experiment with the dangers and difficulties of words. Recall, then, some event that has left a distinct impression on you—how at the corner of the street, perhaps, you passed two people talking. A tree shook, an electric light danced, the tone of the talk was comic, but also tragic, a whole vision, an entire conception, seemed contained in that moment.

But when you attempt to reconstruct it in words, you will find that it breaks into a thousand conflicting impressions. Some must be subdued, others emphasized, in the process you will lose, probably, all grasp upon the emotion itself. Then turn from your blurred and littered pages to the opening pages of some great novelist—Defoe, Jane Austen, Hardy. Now you will be better able to appreciate their mastery. It is not merely that we are in the presence of a different person—Defoe, Jane Austen, or Thomas Hardy—but that we are living in a different world. Here, in *Robinson Crusoe*, we are trudging a plain high road, one thing happens after another, the fact and the order of the fact is enough. But if the open air and adventure mean everything to Defoe they mean nothing to Jane Austen. Hers is the drawing room, and people talking, and by the many mirrors of their talk revealing their characters. And if, when we have accustomed ourselves to the drawing-room and its reflections, we turn to Hardy, we are once more spun round. The moors are round us and the stars are above our heads. The other side of the mind is now exposed—the dark side that comes uppermost in solitude, not the light side that

romance; and then again travel north with that other Lady Pembroke, Anne Clifford, to her wild moors, or plunge into the city and control our merriment at the sight of Gabriel Harvey in his black velvet suit arguing about poetry with Spenser. Nothing is more fascinating than to grope and stumble in the alternate darkness and splendour of Elizabethan London. But there is no staying there. The Temples and the Swifts, the Harleys and the St. Johns beckon us on; hour upon hour can be spent disentangling their quarrels and deciphering their characters; and when we tire of them we can stroll on, past a lady in black wearing diamonds, to Samuel Johnson and Goldsmith and Garrick; or cross the channel, if we like, and meet Voltaire and Diderot, Madame du Deffland; and so back to England and Twickenham—how certain places repeat themselves and certain names!—where Lady Bedford had her Park once and Pope lived later, to Walpole's home at Strawberry Hill. But Walpole introduces us to such a swarm of new acquaintances, there are so many houses to visit and bells to ring that we may well hesitate for a moment, on the Miss Berrys' doorstep, for example, when behold, up comes Thackeray; he is the friend of the woman whom Walpole loved; so that merely by going from friend to friend, from garden to garden, from house to house, we have passed from one end of English literature to another and wake to find ourselves here again in the present, if we can so differentiate this moment from all that have gone before. This, then, is one of the ways in which we can read these lives and letters; we can make them light up the many windows of the past; we can watch the famous dead in their familiar habits and fancy sometimes that we are very close and can surprise their secrets, and sometimes we may pull out a play or a poem that they have written and see whether it reads differently in the presence of the author. But this again rouses other questions. How far, we must ask ourselves, is a book influenced by its writer's life—how far is it safe to let the man interpret the writer? How far shall we resist or give way to the sympathies and antipathies that the man himself rouses in us—so sensitive are words, so receptive of the character of the author? These are questions that press upon us when we read lives and letters, and we must answer them for ourselves, for nothing can be more fatal than to be guided by the preferences of others in a matter so personal.

But also we can read such books with another aim, not to throw light on literature, not to become familiar with famous people, but to refresh and exercise our own creative powers. Is there not an open window on the right hand of the bookcase? How delightful to stop reading and look out! How stimulating the scene is, in its unconsciousness, its irrelevance, its perpetual movement—the colts galloping round the field, the woman filling her pail at the well, the donkey throwing back his head and

emitting his long, acrid moan. The greater part of any library is nothing but the record of such fleeting moments in the lives of men, women, and donkeys. Every literature, as it grows old, has its rubbish heap, its record of vanished moments and forgotten lives told in faltering and feeble accents that have perished. But if you give yourself up to the delight of rubbish-reading you will be surprised, indeed you will be overcome, by the relics of human life that have been cast out to moulder. It may be one letter—but what a vision it gives! It may be a few sentences—but what vistas they suggest! Sometimes a whole story will come together with such beautiful humour and pathos and completeness that it seems as if a great novelist had been at work, yet it is only an old actor, Tate Wilkinson, remembering the strange story of Captain Jones, it is only a young subaltern serving under Arthur Wellesley and falling in love with a pretty girl at Lisbon, it is only Maria Allen letting fall her sewing in the empty drawing-room and sighing how she wishes she had taken Dr Burney's good advice and had never eloped with her Rishy. None of this has any value, it is negligible in the extreme, yet how absorbing it is now and again to go through the rubbish heaps and find rings and scissors and broken noses buried in the huge past and try to piece them together while the colt gallops round the field, the woman fills her pail at the well, and the donkey brays.

But we tire of rubbish-reading in the long run. We tire of searching for what is needed to complete the half truth which is all that the Wilkinsons, the Bunburys, and the Maria Allens are able to offer us. They had not the artist's power of mastering and eliminating, they could not tell the whole truth even about their own lives, they have disfigured the story that might have been so shapely. Facts are all that they can offer us, and facts are a very inferior form of fiction. Thus the desire grows upon us to have done with half statements and approximations, to cease from searching out the minute shades of human character, to enjoy the greater abstractness, the purer truth of fiction. Thus we create the mood, intense and generalised, unaware of detail, but stressed by some regular, recurrent beat, whose natural expression is poetry, and that is the time to read poetry when we are almost able to write it.

Western wind, when wilt thou blow?  
The small rain down can rain  
Christ, if my love were in my arms,  
And I in my bed again!

The impact of poetry is so hard and direct that for the moment there is no other sensation except that of the poem itself. What profound depths we visit then—how sudden and complete is our immersion! There is nothing here to catch hold of, nothing to stay us in our flight. The illusion



of fiction is gradual, its effects are prepared, but who when they read these four lines stops to ask who wrote them, or conjures up the thought of Donne's house or Sidney's secretary, or enmeshes them in the intricacy of the past and the succession of generations? The poet is always our contemporary. Our being for the moment is centred and constricted, as in any violent shock of personal emotion. Afterwards, it is true, the sensation begins to spread in wider rings through our minds, remoter senses are reached, these begin to sound and to comment and we are aware of echoes and reflections. The intensity of poetry covers an immense range of emotion. We have only to compare the force and directness of

I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,  
Only remembering that I grieve,

with the wavering modulation of

Minutes are numbered by the fall of sands,  
As by an hour glass the span of time  
Doth waste us to our graves, and we look on it,  
An age of pleasure, revelled out, comes home  
At last, and ends in sorrow, but the life,  
Weary of riot numbers every sand,  
Wailing in sighs, until the last drop down,  
So to conclude calamity in rest,

or place the meditative calm of

whether we be young or old,  
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,  
Is with infinitude and only there,  
With hope it is, hope that can never die,  
Effort, and expectation, and desire,  
And something evermore about to be,

beside the complete and inexhaustible loveliness of

The moving Moon went up the sky,  
And no where did abide  
Softly she was going up,  
And a star or two beside—

or the splendid fantasy of

And the woodland haunter  
Shall not cease to saunter  
When, far down some glade,  
Of the great world's burning,  
One soft flame upturning  
Seems, to his discerning,  
Crocus in the shade

to bethink us of the varied art of the poet, his power to make us at once actors and spectators, his power to run his hand into character as if it were a glove, and be Falstaff or Lear, his power to condense, to widen, to state, once and for ever

"We have only to compare"—with those words the cat is out of the bag, and the true complexity of reading is admitted. The first process, to receive impressions with the utmost understanding, is only half the process of reading, it must be completed, if we are to get the whole pleasure from a book, by another. We must pass judgment upon these multitudinous impressions, we must make of these fleeting shapes one that is hard and lasting. But not directly. Wait for the dust of reading to settle, for the conflict and the questioning to die down, walk, talk, pull the dead petals from a rose, or fall asleep. Then suddenly without our willing it, for it is thus that Nature undertakes these transitions, the book will return, but differently. It will float to the top of the mind as a whole. And the book as a whole is different from the book received currently in separate phrases. Details now fit themselves into their places. We see the shape from start to finish, it is a barn, a pig sty, or a cathedral. Now then we can compare book with book as we compare building with building. But this act of comparison means that our attitude has changed, we are no longer the friends of the writer, but his judges, and just as we cannot be too sympathetic as friends, so as judges we cannot be too severe. Are they not criminals, books that have wasted our time and sympathy, are they not the most insidious enemies of society, corrupters, defilers, the writers of false books, faked books, books that fill the air with decay and disease? Let us then be severe in our judgments, let us compare each book with the greatest of its kind. There they hang in the mind the shapes of the books we have read solidified by the judgments we have passed on them—*Robinson Crusoe* *Emma* *The Return of the Native*. Compare the novels with these—even the latest and least of novels has a right to be judged with the best. And so with poetry—when the intoxication of rhythm has died down and the splendour of words has faded a visionary shape will return to us and this must be compared with *Lear*, with *Phedre*, with *The Prelude* or if not with these, with whatever is the best or seems to us to be the best in its own kind. And we may be sure that the newness of new poetry and fiction is its most superficial quality and that we have only to alter slightly, not to recast, the standards by which we have judged the old.

It would be foolish, then, to pretend that the second part of reading, to judge, to compare, is as simple as the first—to open the mind wide to the fast flocking of innumerable impressions. To continue reading without

the book before you, to hold one shadow-shape against another, to have read widely enough and with enough understanding to make such comparisons alive and illuminating—that is difficult, it is still more difficult to press further and to say, "Not only is the book of this sort, but it is of this value, here it fails, here it succeeds, this is bad, that is good." To carry out this part of a reader's duty needs such imagination, insight, and learning that it is hard to conceive any one mind sufficiently endowed, impossible for the most self-confident to find more than the seeds of such powers in himself. Would it not be wiser, then, to remit this part of reading and to allow the critics, the gowned and furred authorities of the library, to decide the question of the book's absolute value for us? Yet how impossible! We may stress the value of sympathy, we may try to sink our own identity as we read. But we know that we cannot sympathise wholly or immerse ourselves wholly, there is always a demon in us who whispers, "I hate, I love," and we cannot silence him. Indeed, it is precisely because we hate and we love that our relation with the poets and novelists is so intimate that we find the presence of another person intolerable. And even if the results are abhorrent and our judgments are wrong, still our taste, the nerve of sensation that sends shocks through us, is our chief illuminant, we learn through feeling, we cannot suppress our own idiosyncrasy without impoverishing it. But as time goes on perhaps we can train our taste, perhaps we can make it submit to some control. When it has fed greedily and lavishly upon books of all sorts—poetry, fiction, history, biography—and has stopped reading and looked for long spaces upon the variety, the incongruity of the living world, we shall find that it is changing a little, it is not so greedy, it is more reflective. It will begin to bring us not merely judgments on particular books, but it will tell us that there is a quality common to certain books. Listen, it will say, what shall we call *this*? And it will read us perhaps *Lear* and then perhaps the *Agamemnon* in order to bring out that common quality. Thus, with our taste to guide us, we shall venture beyond the particular book in search of qualities that group books together, we shall give them names and thus frame a rule that brings order into our perceptions. We shall gain a further and a rarer pleasure from that discrimination. But as a rule only lives when it is perpetually broken by contact with the books themselves—nothing is easier and more stultifying than to make rules which exist out of touch with facts, in a vacuum—now at last, in order to steady ourselves in this difficult attempt, it may be well to turn to the very rare writers who are able to enlighten us upon literature as an art. Coleridge and Dryden and Johnson, in their considered criticism, the poets and novelists them-

selves in their unconsidered sayings, are often surprisingly relevant, they light up and solidify the vague ideas that have been tumbling in the misty depths of our minds. But they are only able to help us if we come to them laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of our own reading. They can do nothing for us if we herd ourselves under their authority and lie down like sheep in the shade of a hedge. We can only understand their ruling when it comes in conflict with our own and vanquishes it.

If this is so, if to read a book as it should be read calls for the rarest qualities of imagination, insight, and judgment, you may perhaps conclude that literature is a very complex art and that it is unlikely that we shall be able, even after a lifetime of reading, to make any valuable contribution to its criticism. We must remain readers, we shall not put on the further glory that belongs to those rare beings who are also critics. But still we have our responsibilities as readers and even our importance. The standards we raise and the judgments we pass steal into the air and become part of the atmosphere which writers breathe as they work. An influence is created which tells upon them even if it never finds its way into print. And that influence, if it were well instructed, vigorous and individual and sincere, might be of great value now when criticism is necessarily in abeyance, when books pass in review like the procession of animals in a shooting gallery, and the critic has only one second in which to load and aim and shoot and may well be pardoned if he mistakes rabbits for tigers, eagles for barn-door fowls, or misses altogether and wastes his shot upon some peaceful cow grazing in a further field. If behind the erratic gunfire of the press the author felt that there was another kind of criticism, the opinion of people reading for the love of reading, slowly and unprofessionally, and judging with great sympathy and yet with great severity, might this not improve the quality of his work? And if by our means books were to become stronger, richer, and more varied, that would be an end worth reaching.

Yet who reads to bring about an end however desirable? Are there not some pursuits that we practise because they are good in themselves, and some pleasures that are final? And is not this among them? I have sometimes dreamt, at least, that when the Day of Judgment dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their rewards—their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble—the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say not without a certain envy when He sees us coming with our books under our arms, 'Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading.'

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 How does Mrs Woolf's essay differ from a manual of reading? Is her advice practical?
- 2 Mrs Woolf's style has been called charming. How is the charm achieved?
- 3 With how many of the authors and works mentioned are you familiar? What is the value and purpose of such prolific reference?
- 4 What can you learn in general about the informal essay from this example?
- 5 Explain the attitude behind Mrs Woolf's advice, "Do not dictate to your author, try to become him."
- 6 What does she suggest about the nature of the appeal of all reading, whether of great authors or minor ones, of novels or biographies or poetry?
- 7 What does she say are the merits of "rubbish reading"? What are its defects?
- 8 Explain Mrs Woolf's conception of the second half of the process of reading *to pass judgment on the impressions we have received*.
- 9 What does she recommend as the way to go about judging the relative worth of books? Why must we do this for ourselves instead of leaving it to the critics?
- 10 What does she say about the final value of reading?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What are some of the kinds of printed matter that Mrs Woolf leaves out of consideration? Why?
- 2 What reasons can you suggest why few people read as much as Mrs Woolf seems to assume they do? Should they?
- 3 What are some of the purposes of printed book reviews?
- 4 Give an example of what you can tell about a novelist himself from reading his novels.

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 My greatest adventure in reading.
- 2 How I read a book.
- 3 Temptations to rubbish reading.
- 4 I'd rather read the book than see the movie (or vice versa).
- 5 A review of a favorite book.
- 6 Autobiography of a reader.

## *Chapter Five*



# The Language of Art

ALL THE ARTS  
ARE BROTHERS;  
EACH ONE IS A LIGHT TO THE OTHERS

VOLTAIRE

# Introduction

For many people buffeted by today's world of rapid change and constant strain, the arts offer peace of mind, tranquility, and genuine recreation. Edna St. Vincent Millay once said of music that it was "my rampart and my only one." Many a New York office worker has drawn strength from the severely intelligent face of Sir Thomas More in the portrait by Holbein in the Frick Museum, or from a great motion picture revived at the Museum of Modern Art. A deep and abiding interest in music and painting results in many richly spent leisure hours, for great works of art, unlike ordinary diversions, have infinite capacity for self renewal.

An educated man uses his leisure time for re-creation as well as recreation, for self renewal, for creating within himself an awareness of the richness, diversity and joy that life can be, though perhaps too seldom is. It seems not unlikely that an understanding and an enjoyment of the fine arts is indispensable to most of us today.

Of the various art forms—painting, sculpture, drama, architecture, motion pictures, photography, and music—the latter three are the ones most readily available to students. The opportunities for going to the movies, seeing photographs, and attending concerts are almost unlimited in university and college communities. Truly, we do not always consider motion pictures an art, for very good reason, nor does the average juke box offer us any very great artistic inspiration in either its appearance or its output. But many great motion pictures are works of art, and an interest in the juke box does not preclude enjoyment and understanding of other kinds of music from folk ballads to operas and symphonies—from which many a juke box tune has been borrowed.

We cannot understand one another unless we speak a common language, and we cannot understand, and hence cannot enjoy literature, music or painting unless we know the peculiar language of each. For art is a complex form of communication. It is the purpose of the essays in this section to introduce you to the languages of art and to open the door to understanding and pleasure.

The eminent critics whose essays comprise this section feel and



imply in common that pleasure in art results from understanding the nature of the art form, and that such understanding results from direct experience, from keeping one's eye or ear, on the object. To enjoy pictures, paintings and photographs—look at them, to enjoy music—listen to it, to enjoy literature—read it. They do not consider it necessary to learn an extensive technical or aesthetic vocabulary in order to develop appreciation. Many of you may not yet have had the time or the opportunity to familiarize yourselves with the famous works of art cited as examples by the four writers, but it is not necessary to be familiar with these works in order to understand the major points the essays make. Each supplies you with a sensitive and relatively simple approach to a medium.

MacKinley Helm is a man who has written extensively on music, Mexico, and art, and his essay 'What to Look for in Pictures' is, as its title states, an introduction to looking intelligently at paintings of any style or period. He is concerned with the means by which the painter communicates his language of line, form, composition, and color. Many of his references to painters and paintings are more familiar than they would have been ten years ago, because of the significant attempts of magazines like *Life* and intelligent advertisers to familiarize us with famous paintings of the past and present.

B. H. Haggin has been for many years the brilliant and controversial critic of *The Nation*. His essay 'Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet' also regards art as a process of communication, although he does not speak specifically of the language of art. He is more concerned with the personal than with the social communication of the artist, although one does not exclude the other. One might maintain that Mr. Haggin asks too little and too much of the listener at the same time, or that he has said in a rather complicated fashion what might have been said more briefly and tersely. The more you listen, however, to the increasing number of good records and broadcasts of great music, the more you will appreciate his basic points.

Erwin Panofsky, an art historian and critic of international fame, is a member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, New Jersey. His remarkable essay on motion pictures may seem at first reading a rather difficult aesthetic treatise, but actually the philosophy

cal terms which may trouble you at first are explained and illustrated very simply and concretely throughout the essay. Like the other critics in this section, Mr Panofsky is interested in defining the medium, in this case of motion pictures, in examining the particular basic nature of the medium, its unique and specific possibilities. He explains for us what he feels to be the unique language of the film, and he demonstrates (perhaps not to everyone's satisfaction) that the best motion pictures are those which exploit that language to its fullest possibilities.

Beaumont Newhall is one of the leading historians of photography. His work at the Museum of Modern Art and as curator of Eastman House, the photographic museum at Rochester, New York, has done much to make critics and public alike appreciate photography as the fine art it has always been. The increasing attention paid to great pictures by popular magazines and by the country's leading museums requires a more serious critical approach to photography from all of us. Mr Newhall's essay defines with great success and perhaps for the first time, photography as an art, its proper language, and its function.

The four essays together offer you an approach to the four fine arts which are most readily available to most of you. They are suggestive and provocative, but in choosing them the editors have made no attempt to cover the fine arts in general. Like other sections of the book, this one is intended to be introductory, to stimulate rather than to satisfy your interest.

## MacKINLEY HELM

born 1896 is the author of *Angel Mo' and Her Son Roland Hayes*, *John Marin, Journeying Through Mexico*, *Man of Fire J C Orozco*, and *Modern Mexican Painters* [This selection from *Modern Mexican Painters* by MacKinley Helm, Copyright 1941, by Harper & Brothers]

### *What to Look for in Pictures*

I have said that the Mexican painters are severally interested in the problems of painting, and now I should like to approach some of these problems, but rather from the point of view of the spectator, of appreciation of painting, than from that of the artist himself. I should like to ask what it is that we look for when we look at a picture. I should like to ignore, for the moment, much of the usual critical apparatus, the necessary vocabulary of the specialist, and put a few simple questions.

The first question is merely a repetition of Orozco's challenge "Do you like it?"

Do you like the picture you are looking at? Especially, do you like it enough to want to go back to it? If you are looking at pictures seriously, and see one you do not like, you are not morally required to treat it as though, being stupid, you had missed its importance. You are not obliged to worry about it, although if you have a naturally catholic taste you are likely to examine your conscience to determine who is at fault, you or the painter.

If you like a picture it is probably because it makes you feel something, arouses your emotions so that you respond to it, because, at the very least, it interests you. There is no reason in the world why you should be persuaded to look at a dull work of art. Dullness is the artist's sin against the Holy Ghost.

But it is possible to feel something when you look at a picture and yet be unable to describe what it is that moves you. Picasso told Christian Zervos that his ambition was to paint a picture in such a way that nobody could tell how it was done, so that nothing but emotion would be given off by it. In the experience of many people emotion is given off first of all by the subject. This is perhaps an elementary form of æsthetic experience, but it is, I think, æsthetically crippling to be snobbish about the subject matter of a painting, like Dr. Barnes of Merion, Pennsylvania, for example, who professes not to remember the subjects of most of the pictures in the vast collection he owns.

For myself, I object to being told, by lady guides who recite misrepresentations of nonrepresentational art in a certain New York gallery, that

abstraction is the highest form of art. There is no absolute and universal canon by which a particular art form may be so judged. A man who wants good plain representational painting is entitled to have it. Easel pictures are made for the people who will look at them, like them, and possibly buy them. and I have never met a good painter who paints so entirely for himself that he is content to stack up his canvases in the darkness of his studio storeroom, indifferent to appreciation and sales.

On the other hand, painters, good painters, generally choose subjects not so much because they want to represent them factually in paint but because in something they see, or have seen and remembered, there are fascinating suggestions of one or another of the essential elements of their special work. They are attracted by the possibilities of projecting, upon canvas or paper, certain lines, forms, relationships and colors which have been observed in, or suggested by, the physical world.

Hence their emotional attitudes toward their subject matter and toward their work, while it is in progress, are likely to be something very different from those of the ultimate spectator, who will not have looked at the world with the painter's professional eye. Still, if the painter has entered emotionally into the treatment of the materials of his art, chances are that then,—and probably it is only then—the spectator will feel something, not the painter's emotion, but an emotion nevertheless proper to the æsthetic experience of beholding a form of art, an emotion aroused by lines and forms and their relationships, and by the qualities and harmonies of color. In any case, the emotion is what the spectator is after, and if a picture does not give him an authentic emotion the picture does not exist for him.

Now of the qualities of a picture which you like, which awakens interest and feeling, there is much less of importance to be said than you probably think. If you want to go beyond the simple appreciation of the subject matter of a painting and examine the means through which the artist has reached your emotions, there are only a few things you must look for. No special vocabulary is required in order to talk about the painter's professional means, and probably the less said about them the better. *A good work of art, as Renou said, is in the end inexplicable.* But it is the curse of our civilization that we have to talk. we cannot let our emotions alone, and when we are looking at pictures and talking about them the best we can do is try to talk simply and make sense if we can.

Apart from describing the feeling tones of a picture, such as to note that they are mystical, or romantic, or pessimistic, or gay, most of the things which are to be said about painting from the point of view of the spectator have something to do with lines or forms or composition or

color These are the basic materials of the arts which deal with the things that are tangible and malleable, that can be wrought into forms—the plastic arts of painting and sculpture as compared to literature and music

In discussing the linear aspect of a work of art it is necessary to distinguish between 'line' and 'lines' Line is essentially the outline of forms It is not necessarily something which is drawn, frequently it is merely indicated Some painters draw their designs (with 'lines') and fill them with color In such a case the work is principally linear Others, like Rouault, draw unmistakable boundary lines between forms or objects, or, like Renoir, simply differentiate their forms by means of color and light

In fairly flat painting the outlines of figures are sometimes drawn with dark paint, sometimes even with black ink In round or sculptural painting, 'line' is an inherent element of contours which are differentiated not by 'lines' but by contrasting backgrounds In other words, the eye does not necessarily demand an actual line of demarcation before it can see where one object leaves off and another begins Modeling, or merely the modulation of color, may serve to distinguish between forms

Some painters have used lines as the makers of stained glass use them, to increase the intensity of the vibration of color within the enclosed areas Cimabue used this device, and Rouault uses it today in exaggerated fashion However line is employed or indicated, it is of the essence of mature and formal art Competence in draughtsmanship is a *sine qua non* of the painter's equipment At the same time, as Dr Barnes reminds us, 'Line gets power from what it does to what is contained between the lines'

The quality of an indicated line depends upon its expressiveness Manuel Rodriguez Lozano, a Mexican disciple of Picasso, can draw a line from the top of the head to the fingertips, or from the armpit to the toes, in which every part of the body, in its turn, is adequately expressed The presence of that quality in a continuous line distinguishes great drawing from casual draughtsmanship

Purity in line-drawing consists in its sure and unfaltering direction, its adequate conveyance of intention The truth of line does not depend upon its adherence to objective or phenomenal reality On the contrary, linear distortion is as old as art itself It is to be found in the art forms of Egypt, the archaic Grecian world and ancient Mexico True line must obey only the artist's will

The *form* of a work of art is the sum of the relationships, or the organization, of the parts of the picture It is a little confusing, perhaps, that the several parts or objects in a painting are likewise called 'forms' by

the painters, because then the definition of "form" takes on a question-begging aspect: form is the sum of the forms.

I like John D. Graham's definition of a "form" in his *System and Dialectics of Art*: a "consequential mode by means of which an artist authoritatively separates a phenomenon from its setting." Painters very often assemble forms taken from a diversity of settings and give them new and sharper significance in a new setting, in new relationships. Much of the piquancy of Surrealist painting lies in the novelty of relationships between familiar forms.

Forms are likely to be thought of as objects with the appearance of solidity, but it is a mistake to confuse pictorial forms with sculptured forms. The painter must be perfectly free to work within the natural two dimensions of his medium. A plastic form ought rather to be thought of simply as a component part of a picture, functioning as an interesting object in itself and harmoniously related to other forms. Variety in interest is largely determined by the contrasting variety of the several forms. Versatility is attributable to a painter who can exhibit, in a sufficient showing of his work, a variety of forms rather than variations in style. A deliberate variation from a painter's natural style is likely to be merely a *tour de force*.

A painter who is preoccupied with identical forms may end up with a "formula" which will impede his development. The works of El Greco are relatively poor in subject matter—Saint Francis appears in them at least sixty-six times—but there is infinite variety in his forms. Amongst the Mexican painters there are two or three whose present preoccupations seem to be on the verge of resulting in formulas, but there is no canon for determining just at what moment the forms employed during a given period in a painter's career may be said to have crystallized into a formula. The habitual use of a method of treating forms is a "manner." When a painter has both formula and manner he can be given up for lost.

In considering a plastic composition as a whole, a deliberate painter has probably been concerned with such characteristics of the relationship of forms as proportion, symmetry, and rhythm. Modern painters reject many of the classical canons of proportion and symmetry of both the several forms and their relationships. In Mexico, for example, there are painters who prefer the usually compressed Maya and Aztec conceptions of human proportions to the seven heads-to-the-body measurement of the Greeks, just as many painters the world over prefer the sensation of shock generated by asymmetrical designs to the relative restfulness of classical symmetry.

Rhythms occur in repetitions (with variety) of similar forms. The Mexican painter Rufino Tamayo introduced architectural columns to

repeat the rhythms of his columnar Tehuantepec women Francisco Dosamantes, in his invariably rhythmical lithographs, manipulates folds of costume or braided hair into musical patterns

A particularly absorbing problem in composition is that of ordering the forms on a given surface so that the whole space is interestingly filled I confess to the idiosyncrasy of being preoccupied, at the moment, with the treatment which painters give to the negative areas of their surfaces, the parts of the picture in which, so to speak, nothing much is going on It should be the object of the painter to make the negative areas come alive Representational painters are often neglectful of this element of composition, whereas abstract painters are necessarily conscious of the whole of a given surface Indeed, it is to the abstract painter, Josef Albers, that I owe my present interest in this aspect of painting

A picture is not successful in which there is a square inch of dull surface Some of Degas' celebrated behind-the-scenes oils contain woe-fully dreary background areas I have spoken of this weakness in Orozco's earlier frescoes, an infirmity which he has not always overcome save by an overcrowding of forms In watching the development of Siqueiros' sense of mural pattern, and in observing the amazing progress of a young new painter, Guillermo Meza, I have learned—as painters of course know—how negative areas can be made exciting through variation in textures, vibration of color, and the introduction of transparencies and atmospheric play

There are many beautiful works of art in which color has not been employed, such as drawings and engravings, black-and-white gouaches and frescoes But when color is used it must have an integral part in the composition, if only, as in some of Gauguin's pictures, an indispensably decorative part Color is least likely to have the appearance of necessity when it is simply spread over a drawing It is easy enough to distinguish this technique when you look at the original painting, but its detection is irresistible in a photograph In the photographic print the structure of such a picture is likely to be suspiciously too good

In some of Federico Cantu's drawings color is used very slightly for modeling, the forms being hardly modified by it Raoul Dufy often slashes a patch of color on his paper and draws forms upon it with pen or brush These techniques are productive of delightful and sometimes even moving effects They are not intended for finished masterpieces of art In truly great painting, color is employed for both drawing and modeling One of the finest examples of drawing with paint is found in Renoir's 'Les Confidences' in the collection of Dr Oscar Reinhart, in which it is impossible to detect any point at which 'line' is indicated by actual lines In Mexico, two figure-painters who excel in this mature form of

color painting are Federico Cantu, in his oils, and Jesus Guerrero Galvan

This kind of painting, in the long run the most satisfying to most people, is difficult to reproduce for the reason that both lightness and brightness of color, two very different qualities, photograph identically, and so do their opposites, depth of color and shadow or obscurity. From the gray values of a photograph you cannot tell which areas in the original are light or bright on the one hand, or deep or dark on the other.

There was a fashionable period in the history of painting, when color was applied with little attention to line, or deliberately with none. The Impressionists blurred natural line in atmospheric light. It is difficult to get a good idea of a Monet, for example, from a black and white photograph, because the original is essentially a work of color and light. In Mexico there has been very little Impressionistic painting, but there are painters who handle color beautifully and yet show little interest (and sometimes little capacity) in drawing. Tamayo, one of the most celebrated Mexican colorists, does not always produce solid effects in his water colors because of his relative indifference to drawing, as the photographs plainly show, and until quite lately Maria Izquierdo's works have been valued almost entirely for their rich, varied and thoroughly Mexican color patterns.

In discussing color it is necessary to distinguish between the objective properties of the dried colors as they appear on canvas or paper and the suggestive effects secured by painters in their use of pigment. The spectator may be satisfied when he has trained himself to look for only three objective properties,—value, tone, and intensity. Light and dark and the range between are values, mixtures of color, like blue into green, or blue into yellow are tones, the intensity of color is its purity, its unmixed blueness or redness. *These are the terms you will find in the handbooks of the manufacturers of paint, and they are likewise the basic terms of the criticism of art when color is under discussion.* Other aspects of color may be introduced into painting by the juxtaposition, contrast and diminution of the several colors. Thus it is correct to speak of the luminosity of color where light is introduced, of low or high key where the general effect is bright, or, on the contrary, obscure. Usually the color patterns are most harmonious when equal values of different colors are used, and when, as in music, the work is executed in a single dominant key. An ascetic palette, in which few colors are used, attains its own beautiful variety when there is an extensive range of the tones and values of the two or three basic colors.

Two effects which painters look for in applied color are quality and texture. These terms are loosely used, but in the speech of painters, which ought to be the spectator's primary source of understanding, each of these



terms has two ordinary connotations. When a painting is said to have 'quality,' in a general sense, it is usually meant that the colors themselves have such qualities as richness, or purity or transparency. But there is also a more technical sense in which painters speak of the quality of a painting or drawing. When Dr. Atl, for example, told me that he had returned to the use of oil paint for the sake of quality he meant that he felt that oil is the best medium for reproducing the qualities of the physical world. He meant that with oils he could produce skies that are more sky-like, trees that are more tree-like and ground that is more earthen.

This use of the term "quality" is confusingly similar to a painter's primary use of the term "texture." Texture in painting is descriptive of surfaces, and perhaps the spectator thinks first of the plastic reproduction of various real or imagined surfaces, as of flesh, or iron, or wood, or fabric. In this sense, a picture is said to be texturally interesting when it contains a variety of textures. But there is also a more abstract use of the term "texture," referring to the look or feel of a painted surface itself, quite apart from any intention to convey a sense of translated textures. The interest which painters feel in surface textures is illustrated in the diversity of technical means employed in modern painting, the use of brushes and knives and fingers and, in extreme form, the pasting of fabrics and papers and threads and the attachment of metallic objects to a painted canvas.

Finally, the spectator looks for unity in every picture, the perfectly harmonious relationship of line, forms and color, organized to endow the work with the crowning excellence of liveliness, not necessarily with physical movement, for stillness may be ultimately more satisfying than motion, but with an interior vitality which suggests that this created thing is instinct with life.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What should one look for in pictures?
2. Does Helm demand that you have special training in order to appreciate pictures?
3. What does Helm mean by "lines," "forms," "composition," and "color," which he calls the elements of the plastic arts? Are these the language of the painter?
4. In what ways does a painting differ from a piece of sculpture?
5. Compare Newhall and Helm in their approach to pictures, especially their use of the word "form."
6. Does lack of familiarity with the painters Helm mentions block your understanding? Can you supply your own examples? What does he gain by specific references?
7. Helm develops his essay by analysis and definitions. Outline the essay, keeping this fact in mind.

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What do you think should be the reasons for looking at, and if possible owning paintings?
- 2 What do you understand by the term "modern art"? Is there more than one kind?
- 3 What reasons can you think of for being hesitant to condemn paintings you don't like at first sight?
- 4 What feelings and attitudes are children likely to express in the things they draw and paint?
- 5 What can be the "meaning" of an abstract painting as opposed to one which represents or illustrates?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 What one can learn from looking at paintings.
- 2 A great painting
- 3 How to bring art into your home
- 4 A picture tells a story
- 5 Painters should (or should not) choose "ugly" subjects

## B. H. HAGGIN

born 1900 is music critic of *The Nation* and the author of *Book of the Symphony* [Reprinted from *Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet* by B. H. Haggin by permission of Alfred A. Knopf Inc. Copyright 1944 by B. H. Haggin.]

## *Music for the Man Who Enjoys Hamlet*

### I

You reach home, let us say, with expectations of a quiet dinner, of slippers, easy chair, a much read copy of *Hamlet* to take your mind far from the wearying details, arguments, and vexations of the long day at the office. And you learn with dismay that this is the night of the third concert of the city's major series, that your wife is going, and you are going with her.

"Schnabel is playing!"—and it is evident that your eyes should light up in anticipation, but instead you groan in recollection. Later, after a hurried change of clothes, a rushed dinner, seated uncomfortably beside your wife in the concert hall while a gray-haired man plays something called Sonata in B flat major by Schubert, you think as you fold and unfold your program "It seems to mean a lot to Schnabel, and I suppose

it means something to all these other people, but it doesn't make sense to me " But by the time Schnabel is playing Beethoven's Sonata Opus 111 your boredom has given way to irritation, and savagely throwing away the shreds of your program you think "I'll bet it doesn't mean any more to the others or to the old boy on the stage than it means to me " It *doesn't* make sense, and they're only pretending it does "

Some of them may be pretending, but the music Schnabel is playing does make sense—to him, and to others, it makes as much sense, and the same kind of sense, as *Hamlet* makes to you " You don't see that, but you will, I think, if you consider what *Hamlet* is and what it does

To begin with, *Hamlet* is an example of the employment, on a very large scale, of an artistic medium " The nature of this employment we may see more easily in a small scale example—in one of the *Sonnets*

Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,  
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,  
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchymy,  
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride  
With ugly rack on his celestial face,  
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,  
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace  
Even so my sun one early morn did shine,  
With all triumphant splendour on my brow  
But, out! alack! he was but one hour mine,  
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now  
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth,  
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth

Other men have had thoughts and emotions about the love they have possessed and lost, what they have not done is to elaborate these thoughts and emotions into the complex form of words, rich in rhythmed sound, in images, in overtones of sense and feeling, in which Shakespeare makes *his* thoughts and emotions on the subject articulate " The articulateness in words in metrical patterns is common enough " it produces huge quantities of worthless poetry by children, adolescents, adults " In Shakespeare's sonnet, however, the quality of the mere articulateness in the medium is itself uncommon, and its complexities and splendors represent in addition the workings of an uncommonly complex and rich mind and personality " Involved, that is, with the articulateness, operating through it, crystallized in the completed poem, are Shakespeare's personal resources—what he is in character, mind, feeling, what he has lived through, what his experience has done to him, what insights it has given him " This is true even of the sonnet, and it is true more obviously, more richly, more excitingly, of *Hamlet*

If you are moved, excited, exalted by *Hamlet*, if for a time afterwards the real world appears to you wonderfully changed, that is because for several hours you have been looking through Shakespeare's eyes at an imagined world created between the covers of a book or on the stage of a theatre—a world in which the natures of the human beings who inhabit it, the situations in which they are placed, the things they do and say, all express significances which life has come to have for this man with perceptions and insights that you and I do not possess. If *Hamlet* leaves you with an impression of greatness, that impression is one of the greatness of mind and spirit which Shakespeare reveals in his play. And if the insights of that mind and spirit impress you as much as they do, that is because of the richness of the poetic form in which they are embodied and presented to you.

Which brings us to this important fact that if you are affected by *Hamlet* it is, first of all, because you have the personal resources which enable you to appreciate the insights it conveys, but it is also—and this is the important thing for our discussion—because you have the susceptibility to the poetic medium which enables you to be affected by the poetic form in which these insights are conveyed. I say this is the important thing for our discussion because similar insights are conveyed in Schubert's B flat Sonata and Beethoven's Opus 111, but through a different artistic medium, and if they do not get through to your mind it is because the medium is one to which, at the moment, you are not susceptible.

"Perhaps even Shakespeare never reached that final state of illumination that is expressed in some of Beethoven's late music," says Sullivan in his excellent book about Beethoven. If the state of illumination that is conveyed to you by Shakespeare is not conveyed by Beethoven in his second movement of the Sonata Opus 111, the reason is that you are susceptible to Shakespeare's medium of artistic communication but not to Beethoven's, and you will understand how this might be so, if you consider how long and how much you have read Shakespeare, who uses the words that are your own medium of communication and expression, and how few encounters you have had with Beethoven, whose musical idiom is not that of the folk songs or school songs or Broadway songs which you may be familiar with.

Understanding this, you may be disposed to try an experiment—which is to listen to the opening passage of that movement of Opus 111 at least once every evening for a couple of weeks, in order to become thoroughly familiar with it, and to see whether, as you come to know it, you begin to get from it some communication of what a man like Beethoven might feel at the end of his life—the sense of experience mastered, of

profound lessons learned, of resignation, inner illumination achieved. You can hear the passage on side 3 of the Columbia recording of Egon Petri's performance (play it to the point about one and a half inches from the first groove, and for the present resist the temptation to go further than that point)

You will be serving the purpose of the experiment and increasing its chance of success if you listen in the same way to another passage—the opening statement up to the faint rumble in the bass, in the first movement of Schubert's Sonata in B flat, which in a different way also communicates the sense of profound lessons learned, inner illumination achieved. By this time Victor may have issued the English recording of Schnabel's performance.

And listen also to two other passages for what they may communicate to you. One is the beginning of the third movement of Beethoven's Trio Opus 97—the two statements of the piano that are echoed by the violin and cello, which you can hear on side 6 of Victor's recording of the Rubinstein Heifetz Feuermann performance or on side 5 of the old Victor recording of the Cortot-Thibaud Casals performance. The other is the statement of the piano with which the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 begins, and hear it as it is played by Schnabel on the Victor record, not as it is played by Gieseking on the Columbia record.

I have suggested a couple of weeks, but obviously the experiment doesn't have to stop after two weeks. Give yourself all the time you may need to find those passages of music acquiring significance for you, or on the other hand to satisfy yourself that music is not for you the medium of artistic communication which you are willing to believe it is for others.

## 2

If now those passages convey significance to you, we can go on—first of all to get a more precise idea of this significance and how it is conveyed.

In the sonnet I quoted, or in one of Hamlet's soliloquies, we see a complex form of words embody and communicate a complex synthesis of thought and emotion. And if anyone were to ask 'What thought, what emotion?' the answer would be 'The thought and emotion expressed and defined by that form of words.' One can say that the sonnet is concerned with the love which is given and then withheld, one can say further that this love is compared with the sun which lights the earth and then is hidden by clouds, but to do this is not to convey the rich overtones of sense and feeling that are expressed by

Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,  
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,  
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchymy,

and the rest of the poem. The only way of conveying those overtones is to state the precise form of words that Shakespeare himself devised for this purpose.

A painter, too, may be aware only of choosing a bit of paint and placing it on the canvas in relation to a number of other bits, but the choice, the placing, the relation involve exercise of judgment—which is to say that they involve the whole man, the sum at that moment of his experience, thought, emotion, insight. What is involved in the choices and uses of the bits of paint reveals itself through them, and in the end the completed integrated arrangement of lines, colors, planes, masses, and forms is a visual embodiment and communication of a particular synthesis of that experience, thought, emotion, insight.

Roger Fry has described the process of a Cézanne still life, in which bottles, pears, and apples, so commonplace as to have no emotional associations in themselves, are "deprived of all those specific characters by which we ordinarily apprehend their concrete existence," and are "reduced to pure elements of space and volume" which are then "coordinated and organized by the artist's sensual intelligence." He refers to Cézanne's own conception that it was out of these relations of formal elements that emotion was to emanate, and he says "One may wonder whether painting has ever aroused graver, more powerful, more massive emotions than those to which we are compelled by some of Cézanne's masterpieces in this genre." And these emotions to which we are compelled—not by the subjects of the paintings, but by the pictorial treatment of the subjects—these grave, powerful, massive emotions are something we have no way of knowing or defining or conveying, other than by those relations of formal elements on the canvas that were Cézanne's way.

So with the piece of music that is a formal organization of sound—or sounds—in time. The sounds have no external references to objects or ideas, what they have is the internal coherence of a kind of grammar of their own, and the relations in which they are placed—in a texture of horizontal lines of sounds in sequence (melody) and vertical sounds in simultaneous combination (harmony), articulated by duration and stress (rhythm), and colored by the timbres of instruments or voices—are governed basically by this grammar, which is used in an individual style by each composer, in obedience to the laws of his own being. He too, that is, may be aware only of choosing a sound and placing it in relation to a number of others, but the choice, the placing, the relation, involving

exercise of judgment as they do, involve the sum at that moment of his experience, thought, emotion, insight—of which a particular synthesis is finally embodied and communicated in the completed formal arrangement of sounds. If anyone were to ask about the second movement of Beethoven's Sonata Opus 111 "What thought, what emotion, what insight?" one could say, as I did earlier, "The sense of experience mastered, lessons learned, resignation, inner illumination achieved." But one would have to use the same words about the opening of Schubert's B flat Sonata, to describe experience mastered, lessons learned, resignation and illumination achieved that are different from Beethoven's and expressed in different musical terms. This demonstrates the inadequacy of the words, and the fact that here again we have no way of knowing or defining or conveying the synthesis of experience and emotion that is embodied in each piece of music, other than by the formal construction in sound that each man used for the purpose.

One might, for that matter, find no other words than "experience mastered, lessons learned, resignation and illumination achieved" for other pieces of music by Beethoven himself—that is, for the same synthesis of experience and emotion that embodies itself in different constructions of sound. From this we realize that in dealing with a work of art we are concerned not with meaning but with meaning as embodied in form. We read Shakespeare not merely for his profound insights, but for these insights as made explicit and affecting in his rich poetic forms, and so with Cezanne's powerful emotions, and the inner illumination and exaltation of Beethoven in his last years. We are, then, interested in each different formal construction on canvas from which we get the impact of the same powerful emotions, each different construction of sound which conveys to us the same inner illumination and exaltation.

### 3

I have gone into all this to get you to see that just as the way to understand Shakespeare's poem is to read it, and the way to understand Cezanne's still life is to look at it, so the way—the only way—to understand Beethoven's or Schubert's sonata movement is the one you have already used successfully with its opening passage—to listen to it. It was natural for you, when the music made no sense, to ask to be told what its sense was, and to ask to be told in words, since you were accustomed to think of sense as expressible in words. And it was necessary for you to learn to apprehend from a phrase of music a sense which was not definable by words—which was defined solely by the particular organization of sounds in that phrase of music. You may say that I did use words to describe it and help you apprehend it, but they did not really describe

what in the end you had to apprehend from the music and would have apprehended even without my words, and you will discover, when you are accustomed to the medium, that the meaning of a phrase of Beethoven or Schubert is grasped immediately with the sounds, and that if there is any difficulty, what is needed is not explanation of the phrase in words but repeated hearing of it. And you cannot get a wrong idea by listening to Beethoven or Schubert himself, but you will get some very wrong ideas by listening to the people who undertake to speak for him.

It was natural for you also, when the music made no sense, to think that you might understand it if you were told things about it—about the man who wrote it, the period in which he lived, the ideas, tendencies, forces, which influenced him. But when you have experienced the joyousness, buoyancy, and exuberant playfulness embodied in Beethoven's Eighth Symphony you may be surprised to discover the vexations and turmoil that filled his daily life at the time he was writing this work, and you will learn from this that the biographical and historical background of a work of art may be quite irrelevant to it. For it is the inner core of personal qualities, emotions, and insights created by a lifetime of experience that governs the artist's selection and arrangement of words or paints or sounds in a poem or picture or symphony, and although this inner core is constantly altered and developed by his continuing experience, it is not affected by any and every happening of the day. When this inner development in Beethoven had reached the emotions and attitudes we are made aware of by the Eighth Symphony, they pressed for expression in the sounds of this symphony, unaffected by the external turmoil that was irrelevant to them. Earlier, too, it was the heroic emotions and attitudes that Beethoven had developed in the face of disaster which operated through his articulateness in his medium to produce the *Eroica* Symphony, if there had been no French Revolution there would have been no dedication to Napoleon to tear up when he made himself emperor, but there would have been the same *Eroica* Symphony. And Ernest Newman once pointed to the striking differences in the three great symphonies that Mozart wrote in those two months of wretchedness and despair in the summer of 1788, as evidence of the fact that the creative imagination of a great artist functions too deep down within him to be greatly affected by anything that may happen on the surface of his life or his being." It is not, then, the biographical or historical background that gives us a clue to the meaning of the music, it is instead the music that often gives us our only clue to what was going on inside the composer.

But to know even relevant biographical and historical details about a work of art would not make the relations of elements in the work of



art clearer and more significant. It is true, as we have seen, that the whole man was involved in the process which produced the Cézanne still-life; and it is further true that with the man there must have been involved, more remotely, the influences which had operated on him—the general ideas, the social and political conditions of the time. But when you knew these things that were involved in the process you would still have to perceive and feel the impact of the formal relations of space and volume that are the result of the process; and for this the things you knew about Cézanne's life would be neither necessary nor helpful. And so with Beethoven's or Schubert's sonata.

Nor do you need the technical knowledge of the professional musician. A piece of music is, to begin with, an organization of sounds; experiencing it begins with hearing the sounds and the way they are related in each phrase, the relation of one phrase to the next in the progression; and learning to hear these relations is at the same time a process by which you learn to follow the grammar and logic of musical thought, the operations by which it proceeds; but you can do all this without knowing the technical facts and names of what you are hearing. For one of those opening passages to acquire significance for you it was necessary to hear the sounds and their relations, for which you did not have to know that the tonic of C major was followed by a second inversion of the dominant seventh—any more than you have to know that a particular brown which you see in a painting is called burnt umber, and another which is placed in relation to it is called yellow ochre. What is true is that when you have heard something you will find the name of it convenient to use in referring to it; and someone else will find the name convenient to use to refer to it when talking to you about it. But a great many matters which the professional musician is concerned with, and the terms which he uses in discussing them—these you don't have to know anything about.

And now go on to hear what comes after those opening passages.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What is the reason for the title of this essay?
2. How does Haggin relate the enjoyment of literature and music?
3. Why does Haggin say that if one is susceptible to the insights of literature he is also susceptible to the insights of music?
4. What is Haggin's explanation of the richness of experience and insight in a great work of music?
5. Why does he say that words are inadequate to convey the meaning that is found in a musical composition?
6. Explain the statement that we are not concerned merely with meaning in a work of art, but with meaning embodied in form.

7. What does Haggin believe to be the true sources of the artist's composition, in whatever art?
8. Why does he believe it is not necessary to know the technical terms of an art in order to receive what it has to communicate? Does Helm agree?
9. What is the function of Haggin's introduction?
10. What is the main point of Haggin's whole essay?

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Explain what plan you would follow in increasing your understanding of good music
2. For what reasons do people want to learn to understand music?
3. What effect do you think the radio has had in the last 25 years in causing people to understand and enjoy good music?
4. What is the importance of the medium of expression (the language) of an art, and of becoming familiar with it?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. Five (or ten) recordings for a desert island
2. What I think about when listening to music
3. Where to begin in the appreciation of music
4. Music and happiness
5. Music cannot (or can) tell stories

## ERWIN PANOFSKY

born 1892 in Germany, and educated there came to the United States in 1934. His special field is the History of Art, and he has taught at New York University, Princeton, and Harvard. He is now at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. His books and articles have been published in Germany, Austria, England, and the United States. [The first version of the article of which the following is a section was published by the Department of Archaeology of Princeton University, the present version was especially prepared for *The Play: A Critical Anthology*, Eric Bentley ed. Copyright, 1951, by Prentice Hall, Inc.]

## *Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures*

Film art is the only art the development of which men now living have witnessed from the very beginnings, and this development is all the more interesting as it took place under conditions contrary to precedent.

It was not an artistic urge that gave rise to the discovery and gradual perfection of a new technique, it was a technical invention that gave rise to the discovery and gradual perfection of a new art

From this we understand two fundamental facts. First, that the primordial basis of the enjoyment of moving pictures was not an objective interest in a specific subject matter, much less an aesthetic interest in the formal presentation of subject matter, but the sheer delight in the fact that things seemed to move, no matter what things they were. Second, that films—first exhibited in “kinetoscopes,” viz., cinematographic peep-shows, but projectable to a screen since as early as 1894—are, originally, a product of genuine folk art (whereas, as a rule, folk art derives from what is known as ‘higher art’). At the very beginning of things we find the simple recording of movements: galloping horses, railroad trains, fire engines, sporting events, street scenes. And when it had come to the making of narrative films these were produced by photographers who were anything but “producers” or “directors,” performed by people who were anything but actors, and enjoyed by people who would have been much offended had anyone called them “art lovers”.

The casts of these archaic films were usually collected in a “café” where unemployed supers or ordinary citizens possessed of a suitable exterior were wont to assemble at a given hour. An enterprising photographer would walk in, hire four or five convenient characters and make the picture while carefully instructing them what to do: “Now, you pretend to hit this lady over the head”, and (to the lady). “And you pretend to fall down in a heap.” Productions like these were shown, together with those purely factual recordings of “movement for movement’s sake,” in a few small and dingy cinemas mostly frequented by the “lower classes” and a sprinkling of youngsters in quest of adventure (about 1905, I happen to remember, there was only one obscure and faintly disreputable *kino* in the whole city of Berlin, bearing, for some unfathomable reason, the English name of “The Meeting Room”). Small wonder that the “better classes,” when they slowly began to venture into these early picture theatres, did so, not by way of seeking normal and possibly serious entertainment, but with that characteristic sensation of self-conscious condescension with which we may plunge, in gay company, into the folkloristic depths of Coney Island or a European Kermis, even a few years ago it was the regulation attitude of the socially or intellectually prominent that one could confess to enjoying such austere educational films as ‘*The Sex Life of the Starfish*’ or films with ‘beautiful scenery,’ but never to a serious liking for narratives.

Today there is no denying that narrative films are not only “art”—not often good art, to be sure, but this applies to other media as well—but

also, besides architecture, cartooning, and "commercial design," the only visual art entirely alive. The "movies" have re-established that dynamic contact between art production and art consumption which, for reasons too complex to be considered here, is sorely attenuated, if not entirely interrupted, in many other fields of artistic endeavor. Whether we like it or not, it is the movies that mold, more than any other single force, the opinions, the taste, the language, the dress, the behavior, and even the physical appearance of a public comprising more than 60% of the population of the earth. If all the serious lyrical poets, composers, painters and sculptors were forced by law to stop their activities, a rather small fraction of the general public would become aware of the fact and a still smaller fraction would seriously regret it. If the same thing were to happen with the movies the social consequences would be catastrophic.

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In the beginning, then, there were the straight recordings of movement no matter what moved, viz., the prehistoric ancestors of our "documentaries", and, soon after, the early narratives, viz., the prehistoric ancestors of our "feature films". The craving for a narrative element could be satisfied only by borrowing from older arts, and one should expect that the natural thing would have been to borrow from the theatre, a theatre play being apparently the *genus proximum* to a narrative film in that it consists of a narrative enacted by persons that move. But in reality the imitation of stage performances was a comparatively late and thoroughly frustrated development. What happened at the start was a very different thing: instead of imitating a theatrical performance already endowed with a certain amount of motion, the earliest films added movement to works of art originally stationary, so that the dazzling technical invention might achieve a triumph of its own without intruding upon the sphere of higher culture. The living language, which is always right, has endorsed this sensible choice when it still speaks of a "moving picture" or, simply, a "picture," instead of accepting the pretentious and fundamentally erroneous "screen play".

The stationary works enlivened in the earliest movies were indeed pictures: bad nineteenth-century paintings and postcards (or wax works à la Madame Tussaud's), supplemented by the comic strips—a most important root of cinematic art—and the subject matter of popular songs, pulp magazines and dime novels, and the films descending from this ancestry appealed directly and very intensely to a folk art mentality. They gratified—often simultaneously—first a primitive sense of justice and decorum when virtue and industry were rewarded while vice and laziness were punished, second, plain sentimentality when "the thin trickle of a fictive

love interest" took its course "through somewhat serpentine channels," or when, father, dear father, returned from the saloon to find his child dying of diphtheria, third, a *primordial* instinct for bloodshed and cruelty when Andreas Hofer faced the firing squad, or when (in a film of 1893/94) the head of Mary Queen of Scots actually came off, fourth, a taste for mild pornography (I remember with great pleasure a French film of ca 1900 wherein a seemingly but not really well-rounded lady as well as a seemingly but not really slender one were shown changing to bathing suits—an honest, straightforward *porcheria* much less objectionable than the now extinct Betty Boop films and, I am sorry to say, some of the more recent Walt Disney productions), and, finally, that crude sense of humor, graphically described as 'slap-stick,' which feeds upon the sadistic and the pornographic instinct, either singly or in combination

Not until as late as ca 1905 was a film adaptation of "Faust" ventured upon (cast still "unknown," characteristically enough), and not until 1911 did Sarah Bernhardt lend her prestige to an unbelievably funny film tragedy *Queen Elizabeth of England*. These films represent the first conscious attempt at transplanting the movies from the folk art level to that of "real art", but they also bear witness to the fact that this commendable goal could not be reached in so simple a manner. It was soon realized that the imitation of a theatre performance with a set stage, fixed entries and exits, and distinctly literary ambitions is the one thing the film must avoid.

The legitimate paths of evolution were opened, not by running away from the folk art character of the primitive film but by developing it within the limits of its own possibilities. Those *primordial* archetypes of film productions on the folk art level—success or retribution, sentiment, sensation, pornography, and crude humor—could blossom forth into genuine history, tragedy and romance, crime and adventure, and comedy, as soon as it was realized that they could be transfigured not by an artificial injection of literary values but by the exploitation of the unique and specific possibilities of the new medium. Significantly, the beginnings of this legitimate development antedate the attempts at endowing the film with higher values of a foreign order (the crucial period being the years from 1902 to ca 1905), and the decisive steps were taken by people who were laymen or outsiders from the view point of the serious stage.

\* \* \*

These unique and specific possibilities can be defined as *dynamization of space* and, accordingly, *spatialization of time*. This statement is self-evident to the point of triviality but it belongs to that kind of truths which, just because of their triviality, are easily forgotten or neglected.

heavy traffic or a motor-boat steered through a nocturnal harbour, will not only always retain their primitive cinematic appeal but also remain enormously effective as a means of stirring the emotions and creating suspense. In addition, the movies have the power, entirely denied to the theatre, to convey psychological experiences by directly projecting their content to the screen, substituting, as it were, the eye of the beholder for the consciousness of the character (as when the imaginings and hallucinations of the drunkard in the otherwise overrated *Lost Weekend* appear as stark realities instead of being described by mere words). But any attempt to convey thought and feelings exclusively, or even primarily, by speech leaves us with a feeling of embarrassment, boredom, or both.

What I mean by thoughts and feelings "conveyed exclusively, or even primarily, by speech" is simply this: contrary to naive expectation, the invention of the sound track in 1928 has been unable to change the basic fact that a moving picture, even when it has learned to talk, remains a picture that moves, and does not convert itself into a piece of writing that is enacted. Its substance remains a series of visual sequences held together by an uninterrupted flow of movement in space (except, of course, for such checks and pauses as have the same compositional value as a rest in music), and not a sustained study in human character and destiny transmitted by effective, let alone "beautiful," diction. I cannot remember a more misleading statement about the movies than Mr Eric Bentley's in *The Playwright as Thinker*, p. 289: "[The potentialities of the talking screen] differ from those of the silent screen in adding the dimension of dialogue—which, potentially, is poetry." I would suggest: "The potentialities of the talking screen differ from those of the silent screen in integrating visible movement with dialogue which, therefore, had better not be poetry."

All of us, if we are old enough to remember the period prior to 1928, recall the old-time pianist who, with his eyes glued on the screen, would accompany the events with music adapted to their mood and rhythm, and we also recall the weird and spectral feeling overtaking us when this pianist left his post for a few minutes and the film was allowed to run by itself, the darkness haunted by the monotonous rattle of the machinery. Even the silent film, then, was never mute. The visible spectacle always required, and received, an audible accompaniment which, from the very beginning, distinguished the film from simple pantomime and rather classed it—*mutatis mutandis*—with the ballet. The advent of the talkie meant, not so much an "addition" as a transformation: the transformation of musical sound into articulate speech and, therefore, of quasi-pantomime into an entirely new species of spectacle which differs from the ballet, and agrees with the stage play, in that its acoustic component

consists of intelligible words, but differs from the stage play and agrees with the ballet in that this acoustic component is not detachable from the visual. In a film, that which we hear remains, for good or worse, inextricably fused with that which we see, the sound, articulate or not, cannot express any more than is expressed, at the same time, by visible movement, and in a good film it does not even attempt to do so. To put it briefly, the play—or, as it is very properly called, the “script”—of a moving picture is subject to what might be termed the *principle of co-expressibility*.

Empirical proof of this principle is furnished by the fact that, wherever the dialogical or monological element gains temporary prominence there appears, with the inevitability of a natural law, the “close-up.” What does the close-up achieve? In showing us, in magnification, either the face of the speaker or the face of the listeners or both in alternation, the camera transforms the human physiognomy into a huge field of action where—given the qualification of the performers—every subtle movement of the features, almost imperceptible from a natural distance, becomes an expressive event in visible space and thereby completely integrates itself with the expressive content of the spoken word, whereas, on the stage, the spoken word makes a stronger rather than a weaker impression if we are not permitted to count the hairs in Romeo’s moustache.

This does not mean that the scenario is a negligible factor in the making of a moving picture. It only means that its artistic intention differs in kind from that of a stage play, and much more from that of a novel or a piece of poetry. As the success of a Gothic jamb figure depends, not only upon its quality as a piece of sculpture but also, or even more so, upon its integrability with the architecture of the portal, so does the success of a movie script—not unlike that of an opera libretto—depend, not only upon its quality as a piece of literature but also, or even more so, upon its integrability with the events on the screen.

As a result—another empirical proof of the coexpressibility principle—good movie scripts are unlikely to make good reading and have seldom been published in book form, whereas, conversely, good stage plays have to be severely altered, cut, and, on the other hand, enriched by interpolations to make good movie scripts. In Shaw’s *Pygmalion* for instance, the actual process of Eliza’s phonetic education and, still more important, her final triumph at the grand party, are wisely omitted, we see—or, rather, hear—some samples of her gradual linguistic improvement and finally encounter her, upon her return from the reception, victorious and splendidly arrayed but deeply hurt for want of recognition and sympathy. In the film adaptation, precisely these two scenes are not only supplied but also strongly emphasized, we witness the fascinating activities in the

laboratory with its array of spinning disks and mirrors, organ pipes and dancing flames, and we participate in the ambassadorial party, with many moments of impending catastrophe and a little counter-intrigue thrown in for suspense. Unquestionably these two scenes, entirely absent from the play, and indeed unachievable upon the stage, were the highlights of the film, whereas the Shavian dialogue, however severely cut, turned out to fall a little flat in certain moments. And wherever, as in so many other films, a poetic emotion, a musical outburst, or a literary conceit (even, I am grieved to say, some of the wisecracks of Groucho Marx) entirely lose contact with visible movement, they strike the sensitive spectator as, literally, out of place. It is certainly terrible when a soft-boiled He-Man, after the suicide of his mistress, casts a twelve foot glance upon her photograph and says something less-than-coexpressible to the effect that he would never forget her. But when he recites, instead, a piece of poetry as sublimely more-than-coexpressible as Romeo's monologue at the bier of Juliet, it is still worse. Reinhardt's *Midsummer Night's Dream* is probably the most unfortunate major film ever produced, and Olivier's *Henry V* owes its comparative success, apart from the all but providential adaptability of this particular play, to so many *tours de force* that it will remain, God willing, an exception rather than set a pattern. It combines "judicious pruning" with the interpolation of pageantry, non verbal comedy and melodrama, it uses a device perhaps best designated as "oblique close-up" (Mr Olivier's beautiful face inwardly listening to but not pronouncing the great soliloquy), and, most notably, it shifts between three levels of archaeological reality: a reconstruction of Elizabethan London, a reconstruction of the events of 1415 as laid down in Shakespeare's play, and the reconstruction of a performance of this play on Shakespeare's own stage. All this is perfectly legitimate, but, even so, the highest praise of the film will always come from those who, like the critics of the *New Yorker*, are not quite in sympathy with either the movies *au naturel* or Shakespeare *au naturel*.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What does Panofsky mean by "folk art" and "higher art"?
2. Why does he say that movies, architecture, cartooning, and commercial design are the only visual arts entirely alive? Does he support the point?
3. What was the appeal of the early movies? Why are they spoken of as folk art?
4. Panofsky uses two rather difficult phrases when he speaks of the "dynamization of space" and the "spatialization of time." He clarifies and develops these terms throughout the essay. Can you explain exactly what he means in your own words?



- 5 Why does he believe that the spoken words of the sound track are decidedly secondary to what is visible on the screen? How does he use the close up to confirm this point?
- 6 What are the essential differences between the stage and the motion picture? What advantage as an art form does the motion picture have by its very nature?
- 7 Explain what Panofsky calls the principle of coexpressibility using his own very simple explanation of what he means. Is coexpressibility an element of motion pictures only?
- 8 Panofsky speaks of the language of the motion picture. What is it, according to him?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What kinds of movies make the most extensive use of motion in telling their story?
- 2 What advantages are gained in motion pictures by the ability to have the camera move to any desired point?
- 3 What advantages are gained by the ability to range from the microscopic to the immense on the screen?
- 4 What do you think is the probable artistic value of the three dimensional effects (cinemascope etc ) now being used in the movies?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 How movies influence manners.
- 2 Why I like (or dislike) movie cartoons
- 3 The most artistic movie I have seen
- 4 A review of a current movie
- 5 Foreign vs American movies
- 6 A stage play and its movie version, e g *Romeo and Juliet*

### BLAUMONT NEWHALL

born 1908 has been the Librarian of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and since 1948 has been Curator of George Eastman House the famous photographic museum in Rochester New York. [Reprinted by permission of the writer from New Directions 15 Copyright 1955 by New Directions]

## *Photographing the Reality of the Abstract*

There are two courses open to the photographer. He can make the uncommon common. Or he can make uncommon the common.

The classic example of the photographer who aims to make the uncommon common is the news photographer. His goal is not to record

the ordinary and the everyday, but the extraordinary and the unusual. Wherever there is disaster, the newsman is there. If he cannot find disaster, he searches for the odd and the peculiar, the exotic and the unfamiliar. His photographs, seen by millions, make momentary events and strange occurrences all over the world our common property. What more striking evidence could be offered of this power of photography than the atom bomb? The mushroom cloud, the very symbol of nuclear fission, has become known through photographs.

This documentary phase of photography was brilliantly presented in the winter of 1954-1955 by Edward Steichen at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in an exhibition titled "The Family of Man." The purpose of the exhibition was to restore man's faith in his neighbor by showing that all over the world he has the same reactions. Only photography could bring together point by point visual comparisons of people doing the same things all around the earth. Again and again in the dramatic and spectacular display we were shown that everywhere the love light of youth is the same, that everywhere motherhood is expressed in the same way, that children play and men laugh and weep and struggle and die in the same way.

There is another function which photography can play, making uncommon the common. This, of course, is the way of the painter. Time and place, so all important to the documentary picture maker, are of less interest to these cameramen. We are not concerned with their work as representational and objective, but as visually stimulating and subjective. Not that which is shown, but how the photographer has looked at the world about him is the simplest way to describe this approach.

It would be oversimplifying the problem to divide these two approaches into illustration on the one hand and concern with form on the other. The documentary photographer does more than illustrate, and the photographer whom we must call, for lack of a better term, "pictorial," does more than to record form. But still such a distinction makes the difference between the two.

The pictorial photographer is tempted to invade the territory that rightfully belongs to the painter. There is a long and often dreary tradition in the history of photography of the misuse of camera, lens and light sensitive material to emulate what is better done with brush, pigment and canvas. Almost a hundred years ago, Henry Peach Robinson, imitating by the most skillful and ingenious techniques the genre and moralistic paintings of the Victorian period, set a style by precept and dictum. His book, *Pictorial Effect in Photography*, had an enormous influence. When Impressionism gained acceptance, photographers followed, taking their cameras out of doors and focusing unsharply in an

attempt to eliminate detail and compose by masses. And more recently the pioneers of abstract painting (themselves strongly influenced by objective photographs taken for scientific and record purposes) pointed out a path which subjective photographers found almost irresistible.

A school of *avant garde* photographers, in their enthusiasm for the ideals of the abstract painter, began to degrade the medium by forgetting that what they were working with was the camera and light sensitive material. They laid heavy hands upon the delicate detail which a lens naturally records. By darkroom tricks they coarsened edges already precisely rendered. They deliberately invited bad processing so that the silver grains which form the image would clump together, creating a pebble-like overall pattern. They even melted the gelatin emulsion until it sagged and drooped, distorting the image which it bore. Or they forsook the lens entirely, to create designs directly on sensitized paper by placing upon it objects both opaque and translucent.

The heyday of this so-called "experimental" photography was 1929, when a great photographic exhibition, "Film und Foto," was held in Stuttgart by the Deutsche Werkbund. Today the style is moribund. We have learned much about photography, and much about painting. It is realized that it is wasteful for the photographer to emulate the painter. How rooted the "Film und Foto" exhibit was in the discipline of painters can be judged by the fact that an art historian, reviewing the exhibition in a photographic magazine, found no difficulty in pigeonholing the photographs on display in three categories of painting: Expressionism, Abstraction, and the New Objectivity. The work shown at Stuttgart which today remains memorable was largely contributed by Americans: Edward Weston and his son Brett, Edward Steichen, Charles Sheeler, and Berenice Abbott.

They, with others, notably Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand and Ansel Adams, were already formulating an approach to photography which had no name but was loosely called "straight" or "purist." It was a functional esthetic. Since the camera image can contain infinite detail, let the negative be sharply focused and the print of the same size on smooth paper. Since time can be stopped in its tracks by using fast film, let us explore the unseen attitudes of objects and beings in motion. Since the camera linder or the ground glass focusing screen isolates segments of the world, let us move in closely to isolate details. But no esthetic can be purely mechanistic. Behind these constantly reiterated technical criteria lay an awareness, which seldom became articulate, that photography has a psychological basis different from other picture making ways.

The photographic image implies authenticity. How often have we heard the cliché "The camera does not lie." We know that it does.

outrageously so, yet we refuse to believe our common sense. Someone was there, we feel, behind the camera when the shutter clicked and the exposure was made. And the resulting picture contains an amount of detail which could not be duplicated by the human hand. In the wealth of detail there is, almost always, something with which we are familiar, perhaps the mere texture of rock or weathered wood. From there we go on to believe that which we cannot understand.

Detail in a photograph also plays a psychophysical role. The reduction of a part of the natural world to a rectangle of fairly small dimensions serves as a device to heighten our perception. As we look about us, our eyes constantly rove, scanning the scene. In the photograph no such exertion is needful, though we do not take in the picture at a single glance, still the action of scanning is much less. The classic photographers of the straight approach have all preferred the 8 x 10 inch print size, which fully reveals detail, yet can be comfortably seen. Furthermore they mount these prints on white boards with wide borders to isolate the image.

A painting may be of intrinsic value for its surface texture. The quality of the pigment, the evidence of the artist's hand in the drag of the brush or the trowelling of the palette knife, play an important role in our appreciation of a painting. In photography any surface texture is an intrusion, and any attempt to emulate what is basic to the painter's craft by imposing a texture is bound to fail.

Form is basic to all art. The painter creates form, the photographer can only recognize it—unless he chooses to arrange objects in space for the purpose of photographing them, and then his skill lies in his ability to arrange, and the camera becomes simply a recording machine. Photographers endowed with a creative visual imagination recognize form everywhere, even in the most common of objects. If they have sufficient skill, the form dominates the picture, arresting our imagination and compelling us to experience it. Here the photographer runs a course parallel to the painter. But, almost instantaneously, the spectator demands to know *what* is represented in the photograph, because he is so conditioned by the millions of factual photographs that he has seen. The painting, by its texture and calligraphy, provides us with sensuous beauty which is self-sufficient and, so to speak, carried by the form. The photograph leads us directly back to the world, for (if it is an honest photograph) it contains many clues to recognition. Thus we do not expect a photograph to be an *object* of beauty, rather, it is an *experience* which can be enjoyed over and over. Someone, with eyes keener than ours, saw form in what we have passed by a thousand times. Someone has made uncommon, and very special, the common. Our perceptions are

sharpened. And if this experience can be linked with other experiences, by the train of associations set off by the form as well as the content, our emotions may be aroused. Alfred Stieglitz called some of his photographs "Equivalents" because to a remarkable degree they had this stimulating, catalytic effect upon the spectator.

When the photograph is rooted in reality, abstract form becomes functional. It sends us back to the world visually refreshed and stimulated.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What is the structure of Newhall's argument?
2. How does he distinguish between the two courses open to a photographer?
3. Newhall develops his discussion by contrasts. What are they?
4. What are some examples of news photographers taking pictures of the odd or exotic?
5. What parallels to painting does Newhall find in photography? Where does he think photographers should separate from painters?
6. What is the psychological basis of photography which Newhall considers the basis of photography as a fine art?
7. According to Newhall, what is the best kind of photographic art?
8. What is the value of "making uncommon the common"?
9. What definitions do you wish Newhall had supplied?

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. In what ways can the camera 'lie'? Why is this 'lying' sometimes desirable in fine art?
2. How would you defend and how refute the proverb "One picture is worth a thousand words"? When is it? When isn't it?
3. Take an issue of a popular picture magazine and evaluate the photographs as documentary or pictorial, and then discuss them further in the light of this essay.
4. Evaluate the roles of the painter and the photographer in our time. How do their functions differ?
5. When and how is it possible for a documentary photograph to be a work of art?
6. What is the contemporary role of the photograph in mass communication? Should there be more or fewer photographs?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. Camera vs typewriter
2. Too many pictures spoil the news
3. A photograph I'll always remember.
4. Photography is (or is not) a fine art.
5. The camera eye and my own eye.
6. Painting vs photography

## *Chapter Six*

# Mass Media of Communication



MATTER OF FACT, I IS INVENTED SOMETHIN'  
WHICH WILL REPLACE THE BOOK

POGO

## Introduction

Today, the average American is engulfed in words and in pictures. He spends a part of almost every day reading at least one newspaper, listening to a few radio programs, and sitting in front of a TV set—his own, his neighbor's, or his bartender's. In addition, he probably goes to the movies once a week or so. When he is in college, he seldom needs to sacrifice these putatively necessary pleasures, even though his reading and listening time has much increased through classes and through studies. Few of us today are out of range of an aerial or a newstand. This massive and engulfing stream of communication is of immeasurable value, provided that we do not merely allow it to carry us along or do not perish in its immensity. There is too much to swallow, almost too much to swim in.

Let us alter the figure. Since we can never take in, consume, or evaluate *all* which surrounds us, we must learn our way around with guidance and informed help. We must learn to distinguish the accurate from the inaccurate, the informed from the purely biased, the tasteful from the vulgar, the artistic from the crude, the reality from the sham. Much of our college education is shaped to these ends. Many courses are taught to accomplish them, especially courses in communication and surveys of the mass media.

This anthology, aiming to develop maturity, which includes among other things critical thinking and good taste, cannot hope more than merely to introduce you to critical essays which offer you guidance and insight into the mass media. Mass media of communication play a most important role, as we realize, and they must be continually studied as well as observed.

A properly functioning society depends upon an informed public. If government is truly to be by the governed, public opinion which shapes and influences government must be based upon accurate information and the public must have access to all points of view. It is not always easy for the untutored reader or listener to get the information which he needs, but it is possible to train oneself to read and listen *critically* and to broaden one's listening and reading habits so as to escape the



influence of just one paper, one broadcasting station, or one point of view. Our press, radio, TV, and movies are free agents, and in spite of many limitations they offer us a great diversity of information and opinion. Sometimes, however, we must work to ferret it out.

Freedom of the press (and of other media) really means freedom from government interference. This perhaps is a negative guarantee, for it does not mean that press, radio, TV, and motion pictures are free from pressures of different sorts: from business or labor, from internal censorship, from the need to sell, and countless others. Our mass media have remained remarkably free from government interference. How successfully they have maintained their freedom from other pressures is debatable, as the essays in this chapter suggest.

Essays on the mass media, however brilliant, tend to become dated quickly by reason of their illustrative examples and statistics. The products of the producers of TV, movies, newspapers, and comics tend to impermanence, unlike the work of novelists, painters and sculptors. When you read the essays in this group you will have to bring them up to date for yourself by supplying illustrations and figures from your own recent experience. This minor defect should not blind you to the essential pertinence and insight which the four authors bring to their subjects.

Each of the authors is a sensitive and positive critic, keenly aware of the defects of the medium he is evaluating, but equally alert to its virtues. Alike they see the dangers of mass productions tailored to mediocre tastes, sometimes crassly developed for commercial ends alone. Alike they deplore vulgarity, sensationalism, emphasis upon violence and crudity, and occasional bold faced domination by dollars. But their approaches are basically constructive. They understand the actual potential artistic and social value of the mass media, their suggestions to producers and consumers are constructive. For the former they urge honesty, integrity, courage and imagination, for the latter, critical thinking, sensitive taste, higher standards of appreciation, and so forth.

The critics who tend to deplore the mass products tailored for popular taste sometimes seem at first glance to be kill joys. 'Don't they like anything?' we ask in irritation. Careful reading of these four essays will assure you that it is actually because their authors *do* like, be

cause they do appreciate, that they have undertaken to comment at all. Far from wishing to decrease our pleasure, they wish to increase it by giving us a wider, deeper, more rewarding conception of entertainment.

It is amusing to hear a good story once, twice, or even three times. It is funny to watch a clown trip and fall a number of times. After a while, however, we want to hear a new story or see a clown do something else. And as our critical faculties and our tastes develop, we wish not merely to be amused, but also to be informed and amused in a variety of ways that add to our lives in understanding, in perception, and in genuine and lasting joy.

Richard D. Altick, a professor of English and an experienced writer, offers in his article "On Reading Newspapers" an unbiased and careful analysis of the necessary influences which keep newspapers from their goal of impartial and complete coverage of the news. He does not demand the impossible of either the papers or their readers; he examines realistically and fairly the problems which confront both.

John Crosby is a wise, witty, and caustic critic of radio and TV in his syndicated daily column. In this article, which suffers perhaps from humorous exaggeration, he takes radio's many virtues for granted, and excoriates its faults with the hope that television will avoid them. Though his article is somewhat dated, his advice is sound and his approach to the problem gives us a framework for the evaluation of both mediums, a basis for critical listening.

Al Capp, familiar to all of us as the creator of *L'il Abner*, has also been a radio commentator and social critic. His article ostensibly deals with his own comic strip, but in actuality is a rather serious appraisal of comic strips and of the comic spirit in America. The tremendous influence attributed by serious sociologists and psychologists to the comics and their vast reading public makes a consideration of them imperative to any study of the mass media.

Budd Schulberg spent his youth in Hollywood, has written since for the screen, and is the author of an important book on the subject *What Makes Sammy Run?* In the chapter on art, we consider the movies as a fine art; in this chapter we are examining them as one of the mass media influencing millions and shaped by the forces which control mass communication in this country.

All four writers recognize the necessity for social responsibility and integrity in the mass media, and they consider radio, TV, comics, motion pictures, and newspapers not only as transmitters of entertainment and information, but also as social forces, shapers of taste and attitude

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### *On Reading Newspapers*

In the past few years many thoughtful observers have commented upon the amazing political illiteracy of the American public. Although the public opinion polls are always discovering that the man in the street is ready with an opinion on any subject under current discussion, a follow up poll by a group of cross examiners would reveal that the overwhelming majority of the people who have expressed an opinion are almost completely ignorant of the background of the subject, the issues involved, and the implications of their expressed stand. The scanty knowledge they have of that subject would prove to be derived from incomplete information, hearsay, wishful thinking and prejudice. Yet not only are they ready with an opinion when the Gallup poll man asks them, they are ready to talk others into believing as they believe, and—most serious of all—they will vote on the basis of that frail tissue of error and bias.

Not the least of the ironies of our present American civilization is the fact that our undoubted ignorance of what is really going on in the world is a phenomenon of an age that sees news carried to every man and woman with a speed and volume unthought of a few years ago. In the midst of news—bulky newspapers, incessant commentaries on the air, documentary news films in the theaters—we are starved for truth.

Every college instructor is depressed whenever he refers to a topic currently talked about in the papers to discover that many of his students seldom read newspapers. Nevertheless we have chosen to discuss the critical reading of newspapers rather than the critical hearing of radio newscasts because it is quite plain that the newspaper is still the chief source of what the public knows or thinks it knows about current events. The radio is an increasingly powerful instrument of information, and people who listen regularly to radio coverage as dependable as that of, for instance, the Columbia Broadcasting System are probably better informed than those who depend upon the coverage of all but the very best newspapers. Yet radio journalism has many of the shortcomings of newspaper journalism, and though we shall say little specifically of radio

in the pages that follow, it would be profitable at every point for you to consider whether what we say of newspapers is not true also—with allowances made for the different medium—of radio

What will be said here will undoubtedly seem to give aid and comfort to those who make a virtue of not reading the papers because they are sure the papers are composed largely of lies. Yet such an attitude is scarcely appropriate to one who desires to be educated. It is an evasion born of indolence and too easy cynicism. How else can one begin to learn what is happening in the world, if not by regularly reading newspapers? Radio listening is only a partial substitute, and in any event one who neglects the newspapers will scarcely be very diligent in his attention to commentators and forums. Our remarks on the ways in which newspapers largely fail to report objective truth must not be taken as rationalization for failure to read them. Rather, we intend what follows to be a guide for the *critical* reading and analysis of what the newspapers contain. An intelligent reader can penetrate through the jungles of distortion and suppression at least to the environs of the truth. And, what is more important, he can insist that the papers which he buys give him more truth. For a newspaper is at the mercy of its readers. Without readers, it can attract no advertisers. Without advertisers, it cannot stay in business. If the readers do not insist upon their right to have the truth, so much the worse for them—and for the world.

Although the defined purpose of a newspaper is to distribute accurate information concerning current events, so that a reader may have a reasonably comprehensive view of the world in which he lives, actually there is no newspaper in the world which completely achieves that ideal. For this failure there are two main reasons, which we shall examine in order. The first is the fact that newspaper publishing, like any other business, is a profit making venture. The second is that in the actual writing and editing of newspapers, there are certain practices—traditional if not absolutely necessary—which militate against a dispassionate, well-balanced presentation of the news.

Although the mottoes of many newspapers deny it, newspaper publishing is a business first and a public service second. This is an observation that springs not from cynicism but from practical realism. How may the press of any nation be supported financially? There are but two alternatives: governmental subsidization and private ownership. In a society such as ours, which jealously prizes the principle of freedom of the press, few people would seriously advocate the first, with its ever present danger of bureaucratic control and censorship. There remains the second alternative: private ownership, which implies the profit motive. There have been a few cases in which some wealthy individual

or group sought to underwrite a newspaper without expectation of profit and thus to enable it, in theory at least, to present news without restraint or bias. The most recent example has been Marshall Field III's underwriting of the New York *PM* and the Chicago *Sun*. But even such privately subsidized papers find it difficult to be completely independent, they are, after all, obligated to *someone*. *PM* was as biased, in its own special way, as any newspaper in the country. And in any event, the cost of operating a newspaper is so great that only a few of the very richest men in the country can afford to sink money indefinitely into a paper which shows a deficit each year. The only way in which a newspaper can exist is as a profit-making business.

A paper depends upon two sources for its revenue, its readers and its advertisers. Financially, the advertisers are far more important than the readers, because the sales receipts, from subscribers and newsstand buyers, do not come even close to covering the cost of production. The biggest source of revenue is the sale of advertising space. But no paper can sell advertising space if it has no readers, the only way in which it can attract advertisers is to show them imposing statistics about its wide circulation. ("In Philadelphia nearly everybody reads the *Bulletin*" "The [Atlanta] *Journal* covers Dixie like the dew") And so in the last analysis it is the reader who counts most heavily with the men who put out the newspaper, and it is his tastes and capabilities that every editor and reporter must keep constantly in mind.

The assumption which guides nearly all journalistic practice (there are a few notable exceptions, mainly in the largest cities) is that the average reader has the mentality of a ten- or twelve-year-old. Everything that the paper prints must, therefore, be adapted to this level of intelligence. The writing must be simple and snappy. The range of vocabulary used in news-writing is rigidly limited to the capabilities of the dullest reader, the sentences are short, the paragraphs limited to two or three sentences. Above all, the columns of the paper must be made interesting, and by "interesting" is meant non intellectual and perpetually dramatic. All the news must be presented in terms of men and events, and the deeper issues and concepts and tendencies that shape the news may be neglected without loss. Abstract ideas, according to the newspapermen's theory, never interest the public, because they are not "exciting." Murders, wars, beauty contests, election campaigns, football games, explosions, two-headed calves, unseasonable weather, court trials—all are exciting, in various degrees. The theory is that a newspaper reader is like a playgoer: he demands that he be given something to watch, not to think about. And so, like a play that aims to be a box-office success, the newspaper must keep "talk" down to an absolute minimum,

and must on the other hand make a point of supplying as much suspense, action, and spectacle as it can possibly contrive from the day's material. If the events of the day cannot be presented dramatically, there is little point in mentioning them.

This assumption that the average newspaper reader is like a twelve-year old child at the movies has never been disproved. Many angry words have been written about its supposed fallacy, just as many more have been written about the low intelligence-level of the movies and of radio programs, but the great public that buys the papers, attends the movies, and listens to the radio seems not dissatisfied with what it is given. The newspaper editors, who are intelligent men, cannot be blamed if they continue to be guided by their traditional assumption. Their job is to make up a paper that people will buy. No one would be happier than they if the public did demand a more thoughtful treatment of current events, no one would respond more eagerly to the call for better writing and an adult viewpoint. But they cannot risk taking the initiative. Until their readers concertedly insist upon being treated as adults, the editors will continue to treat them as children.

But putting aside this limitation, it still is not possible for newspapers to provide a clear picture of what goes on in the world. Remember that much of the news is highly controversial. Acts of God, such as tornadoes, or acts of men in their private capacities, such as highway robbery, are about the only staple items of news that do not have an element of controversy in them. If the public is to make an intelligent decision on each issue as it arises, it must be given all the pertinent information, on both sides of the question, which the newspaper can amass. Furthermore, it must be given this information without color, comment, or weighting. This requirement would lay a tremendous responsibility upon any newspaper editor who had a free hand to publish a daily objective account of all that occurred. He would have to be a superhumanly dispassionate man! But actually, under the conditions of newspaper publishing, no editor is either expected or able to be totally unbiased in his reporting of the news.

From the beginning of journalism, it has been recognized that if the press is important as a means of spreading information, it is even more important as a means of influencing public opinion. And there are few men who, if they control a paper, can resist the temptation to use that paper as a mouthpiece for their own sentiments. This in itself is not to be deplored, so long as men of all parties and persuasions are allowed equal freedom to control papers. But there is a difference between expressing opinion, plainly labelled as such, and screening and coloring the news so that the public's reaction is based, not on a knowledge of all the

facts, but on only a selected and weighted segment of them. Unfortunately there are few, if any, papers which limit to the editorial page their attempt to sway public opinion. The "policy" of the paper, openly expressed in editorials, covertly influences the treatment of news on every page. And it is this silent selection and coloration of the news, the specific methods of which we shall discuss later, that every intelligent reader must constantly be on his guard against.

Who, in particular, controls a newspaper's attitude toward the news it reports? First, the advertisers, whose influence usually takes the form of a threat to withdraw their advertising if the newspaper takes a stand, either in its editorials or in its reporting of the news, that is inimical to their interests. Advertisers are business men, and they therefore will not help support a paper which advocates measures that they think will 'hurt business.' In many cases they will urge that the paper present in an unfavorable light such issues as labor movements, government control over prices, profits, and trade practices, and attempts to lower the tariff. Because of their influence, many papers will suppress or mutilate the news of a campaign for more stringent pure food laws or of the exposure of poor working conditions in a certain industry. They will see that political candidates advocating "anti business" measures of one sort or another receive a "poor press." Their influence will be felt also in the reporting of incidental news. If the local Department of Health finds the dining room of a large department store to be a wholesale distributor of disease, the news, though it is a matter of prime public interest, may be kept from print, and if a proposal is made to remove the transit lines from a main thoroughfare, the business houses along that street, whose customers may go elsewhere as a result of the change, will see that the newspaper's publicity of the scheme is properly colored.

This exertion of pressure upon newspaper editors by advertisers is not to be thought of as necessarily constant or universal. There are some business firms which consider such tactics as a form of blackmail, and will never stoop to it, and there are some papers which try valiantly to resist such pressure as is brought to bear on them. Papers which hold a virtual monopoly in their territory are in a much more favorable position than those which are faced with keen competition. If there is no other paper in the area, the advertiser must choose between advertising in a paper of whose policy he may disapprove, and not advertising at all. But the presence of advertising pressure is a constant danger, to which many editors and publishers, who after all must make a living, succumb.

A much more formidable source of influence is the publisher himself, together with the groups with which he is associated. The policy of every paper may be traced to the people who directly or indirectly own it. The



papers owned or controlled by William Randolph Hearst, Colonel Robert McCormick, and Eleanor M. Patterson are thoroughly conservative journals because of the views of these persons. Similarly the *New York Times*, the *New York Daily News*, the Scripps-Howard papers, the members of the Gannett chain, and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (to mention a few at random) reflect, both in their editorial opinions and in their treatment of the news, the attitudes of their owners. Often—usually, indeed—the publishers of newspapers have other financial interests. If a family which controls a certain metropolitan daily also has a large interest in the local transportation system, it may be expected that their paper will seldom publish news that would hurt the transit system, nor will it give anything but meagre or unfavorable publicity to a movement to improve traffic conditions in the city, because this movement, if successful, might tempt more people to drive their own cars instead of riding the buses. And in general, a publisher with other business connections will see that his editors soft-pedal news and opinions which would ‘hurt business.’

This influence is not confined to the men and women whose names appear in the paper’s formal statement of ownership. Often the financial control of a paper is shared, through various arrangements such as loans, with other individuals or groups. They are said to have ‘bought into’ the paper—either as a business venture or for the actual sake of having some voice in the paper’s policy. They too will bring pressure to bear on the editor to insure that nothing harmful to their various interests will be printed, and that, on the other hand, full publicity, appropriately slanted, will be given to everything that they specifically advocate and oppose.

A newspaper’s treatment of the news, therefore, is to a considerable extent at the mercy of the people who supply the money, whether they be advertisers, publishers, or the financial backers of publishers. Nevertheless, the reader cannot be forgotten. Although he cannot do anything about the actual way in which the news is colored and weighted, he can and will stop buying the paper if it seems too patently a tool of certain interests. As a result, its policies must be expressed in such a way as to persuade the reader that the paper has only the public’s interests at heart. In its editorials it may straddle the issue . . . or it may attempt to ‘educate’ the public to accept the other side’s viewpoint. Somewhat less frequently, it may adopt the cause of the public and openly campaign against ‘the interests.’ This last alternative is usually confined to cases in which the public welfare is affected directly and dramatically, as in transportation or other public utilities, and in which the paper’s financial backers have no great stake.

A moment ago we mentioned a situation in which a newspaper exercised a virtual monopoly over its territory. In recent years there has been a serious tendency toward monopolization. The number of dailies has dropped sharply, and the fewer the papers that are available for comparison and for mutual criticism, the smaller is the chance that the reader will be able to piece together the truth. In many large- and medium-sized cities the papers are all in the hands of one interest, even though they may pay lip-service to different political creeds. Journalism stagnates, and public ignorance deepens, when there is no healthy competition among a number of papers.

So much for the outside influences which affect a newspaper's ability to present all the news objectively. We turn now to the question of just what happens to the objective facts of the news as they pass through the reporter's typewriter and under the editor's blue pencil.

A cardinal tenet of journalistic writing, as it is taught in all the schools, is that of objectivity. Ideally, a reporter writing an account of a news event must exclude from his story all suggestion of bias or personal feeling. In practice, however, this principle prevails only under two conditions. The story will be written 'straight' if it has no relation to any topic on which the paper has a "policy," and if dressing it up would not improve it for popular consumption (four sick children deserted by their widowed mother). Under ordinary circumstances, the report of a traffic death might begin in this manner:

Mary V——, 25, was instantly killed at 10 30 a m. today when the car she was driving collided with another at the corner of 6th and Main Streets.

But if the paper has been sniping at the city administration, which is dominated by the opposite political party, it might neatly turn the story into a not too well concealed attack upon the Department of Public Safety:

Residents in the neighborhood of 6th and Main Streets this afternoon were planning an organized campaign for a traffic light following the death there today of pretty Mary V——, 25, whose car collided with another at the unprotected intersection. Viewing the girl's mangled body which was hurled 75 feet and landed in a gas station driveway, residents recalled that this was the third death at the site within a year. Several petitions to the city government for a traffic light have been fruitless.

In this account, a little subjective detail creeps into the language: *pretty* and *mangled* are words designed to evoke pity, from which it is hoped, indignation will then spring. But the bias lies not so much in the writing as in the selection of detail. Presumably everything that is said is true, but the details are chosen and emphasized so as to leave but one

impression with the reader the lethargic city government is responsible for this pretty girl's death! Perhaps if the paper had helped elect the administration, it would not have given so much prominence to the state of feeling in the neighborhood

Now if the paper's "slanting" of this story resulted in the erection of a traffic light and the saving of lives, it was justified. But too often such more or less subtle coloring of the news can do great harm by influencing the reader's judgement before he can form his own opinion on the basis of all the facts

Another steep cut in the city's budget for next year was revealed today when Homer D. B——, city comptroller, announced that he had slashed by 30% the municipal university's request for funds. This will result in a saving to the taxpayers of about \$300,000, and is in line with the ——— Party's pledge last November to balance the city budget for the first time since 1931. The economy will be effected mainly by dispensing with junior members of the instructional staff and the distribution of their work among the other members of the faculty.

Again, every statement in the paragraph probably could be proved correct. But the paragraph is written and weighted so as to imply approval of the transaction. Compare it with this account of the same event, from another paper:

The municipal university today was the newest victim of City Comptroller B——'s campaign to balance the city budget, as it was announced that the institution's request for funds had been cut by 30%. According to Chancellor R—— of the University, the proposed cut will cause a number of teachers to be dismissed at a time when enrollments are soaring to new highs. "We cannot be expected to do a decent job educating the young men and women of this area," Dr. R—— said today, "unless we are given the money to pay teachers. This is a false economy."

Because their subscribing newspapers are of all popular shades of opinion, the material distributed by the great wire services, the United Press, the Associated Press, and the International News Service, is fairly free from bias. Such slanting as it possesses is the result of the use of newspaperese rather than of any deliberate intention on the part of the writer. But in many newspaper offices, "wire stories" are customarily altered to fit the slant of that particular newspaper. The wording may be changed slightly to fit local prejudices, and the story may be tailored so as to omit details which would not fit in neatly with those prejudices. Furthermore, since every newspaper receives much more wire material than it can possibly use in its next edition, it is forced to select a few from a large mass of stories, and those few will inevitably reflect the present preoccupation of the paper. If, for example, a congressman makes a speech

attacking the TVA, a paper which opposes public ownership of utilities will probably find room for the dispatch. But if, the next day, another congressman defends TVA and points out several serious errors in the first speaker's facts, the paper may suddenly become too full to permit inclusion of the rebuttal. In a Republican paper, the utterances of orthodox Republicans always will be featured, and those of Democrats neglected or at least played down, except when the paper expects they will invite Republican rejoinders. And the converse is true, of course, of a Democratic paper. It is seldom possible to discover what both sides are saying without reading two papers.

Newspaperese is a peculiar kind of jargon. Newspaperese, from the journalist's point of view, is indispensable. The words which comprise it are, many of them, the shortest words that will convey their respective ideas—and short words are the headline writer's salvation. They are also pithy and vivid, they not only describe, they dramatize. And finally, they are convenient. Like all clichés, they save the trouble of searching for a fresh word when the presses are waiting. But for all their terseness and availability, they are obstacles in the way of truthful communication.

Such stock words as *attack* and *demand* are customarily used whenever someone disapproves of something or asks for something else. The word *clash* is almost automatically called forth whenever there is a disagreement between two persons or factions. *Crisis* is used to describe almost any state of affairs in which harmony is less than complete.

Now such words have consistently dramatic, even violent, connotations. And because they are used indiscriminately of a minor and entirely temporary difference of opinion between two city councilmen and of a genuinely serious break between major nations, they have the effect of placing all news, the trivial and the momentous, on the same plane of interest. A discussion at the city hall or the state capitol, in which Republicans and Democrats air their respective views according to routine, obviously does not have such grave implications for the future of civilization as does a first-class row between the United States and Russia. Yet the language makes no distinction between them and the reader, accustomed to reading of "crises" and "tongue-lashings" and "battles" on the floor of Congress in every issue of his newspaper, understandably becomes blasé. What is important, and what is not? The newspaper will not help him decide. Everything is important to the newspaper editor anxious to increase circulation.

This habitual use of intemperate language is simply one solution of a larger problem—that of keeping the reader interested. As we have said, practical newspaper men cannot afford to regard their papers as primarily a means of educating the public. Despite all the pious sentiments which

newspaper publishers and editors utter concerning the function of a free press in a democracy, the fact remains that every editor's first job is to attract his readers to the news stories, so that they will be led in turn to the advertising columns. As you may have discovered by this time, education is not necessarily interesting. Information, however vital, may be deadly dull. And if the choice lies between informing the public and giving it something interesting to read, editors unhesitatingly select the second. Recently a reader complained to the editor of a member of a large newspaper chain that his paper neglected to report international happenings except in the barest, most fragmentary form. The editor calmly replied, "A family newspaper has to be edited with the thought that a great deal of important news is not interesting, and a great deal of interesting news is not important." In every case, interesting news (an "attack-slaying," the death of a wealthy hermit, the discovery of a method of reading a woman's character by examining her legs) will take precedence over important news (a debate in Congress over a new trade agreement, new steps in the nationalization of British industry, newly announced results of cancer experimentation).

Of course there is a certain segment of news which is of such unquestionable importance that it must be given space, regardless of its essentially unexciting qualities. Diplomatic interchanges, the discussion of a major phase of governmental policy, industrial problems—these are basically intellectual issues, "thought stuff." If they are to be handled at all, they must somehow be given color and drama. And so the first job of the newspaper writer is to seek tirelessly for a "news angle"—some aspect of the situation that will give him something to write excitedly about, something that a copy editor can put a headline over. It does not matter at all if the 'angle' seizes upon some trivial or irrelevant occurrence, an insignificant side-issue, the "story" is the thing. In an international conference, a brief 'clash' of tempers between two diplomats will provide fine headlines for the evening papers. No matter that the "clash" is all over in two minutes and someone else made a speech of top importance an hour later, the 'clash' is the news of the day. The day-to-day reporting of the work of Congress is a dull affair, somehow it must be livened up. And so every congressman or senator who 'hurls a charge' at someone else, however ridiculous and unfounded the charge, is sure of ample newspaper coverage. There are always numerous members of Congress who are ready to provide reporters with copy for the sake of sensational personal publicity, and one of the first responsibilities of the intelligent reader is to single out those men and steadfastly disregard what they say.

Because the newspapers are so preoccupied with whatever is sensational and dramatic, a great deal of the most important news goes completely

One particularly dangerous result of this limitation of space is the cutting of quotations from people's utterances. Given a mimeographed 'hand-out' of someone's speech, a reporter will quickly scan it to find a sentence or two which he thinks will make the best (*i.e.*, most interesting) story and, if the speech is a controversial one, will fit in best with his paper's policy. It does not matter if the sentences thus selected for quotation are relatively unimportant—a mere aside in the speaker's main discourse, nor does it matter if, when wrenched from context, they represent the speaker as saying something entirely different from what he meant. The truly critical reader will never base an opinion upon the exceedingly fragmentary press report of someone's public utterance. He will withhold opinion until he can see the full text.

But there are also days when there is not enough news to fill the customary space. What then? The paper cannot let its readers down. Somehow it must find enough excitement to make them believe they are getting their money's worth. And now, instead of being faced with the evil of incomplete and therefore distorted coverage, we are faced with the no less serious one of exaggerated importance. The editor, confronted with the problem of putting out his daily edition, can do two things: he can "blow up" such news as he possesses, and he can create news. Usually he does both. The result in both cases is still further loss of perspective.

When the editor 'blows up' a news story, he takes one which on normal days would merit a three-hundred-word coverage and allots it a thousand words instead. The reader, who understandably is in the habit of judging the importance of a news item by the amount of space devoted to it, thus concludes that the story is much more important than it actually is. A case in point occurred while this chapter was being written. For a while early in 1946 the biggest news stories concerned widespread labor troubles in America, such as the General Motors, General Electric, and New York tugboat strikes. Because these stories were of much more immediate interest to readers and because they touched upon topics of basic concern to the newspapers' publishers and their backers, they occupied the front pages, and the first meeting of the United Nations Organization in London received inadequate coverage except when there were dramatic encounters between diplomats. But then most of the strikes were settled, and a vacuum was left on the front page. At that moment there occurred a series of sharp verbal interchanges between Russia and the other two members of the "Big Three." If these had occurred during the period of strikes, they would have received limited coverage, but now, in the dearth of other news, they were given a play completely out of proportion to their real significance. The result was that the public received an exagger-

ated notion of the "crisis" among the great powers, and opinion concerning Russia was decidedly altered

The tone of public opinion, then, is often determined by a totally irrelevant and fortuitous circumstance—the condition of the "news market" at the moment. During the doldrums, events and statements which have relatively little significance in the total pattern of affairs are magnified far beyond their true value. It is now a matter of history that the Spanish-American War was caused to no small extent by the eagerness of the Hearst press to have something to put into flaming headlines, as well as by the personal political ambitions of its owner. And although newspapers seldom deliberately mold history in this way, their solution to the problem of what to write about on dull days often has that eventual effect.

The editor's device of actually creating news to fill gaping spaces in his next edition is usually limited to local affairs. Many newspaper "crusades" have their origin in this way. The paper suddenly discovers that there are wretched slums in the heart of the city, or that the police department is lax in its enforcement of traffic laws. Often, of course, such campaigns result in genuine improvements, although they may lose fervor as soon as spontaneous news comes along—or until some powerful "interest" is offended. But often they have the effect of misrepresenting a situation. A certain municipal agency, for example, may be doing its work as honestly and efficiently as conditions permit, and then, on an unlucky day, a reporter, desperate for a story, discovers some isolated case of injustice or graft and emblazons it on page one. Although to any disinterested observer a mountain has been made out of a molehill, the resultant publicity may seriously weaken and demoralize the agency thus embarrassed.

One final source of distortion is the physical makeup of the paper. Page one is what sells every paper on the newsstands. Page one must, therefore, contain the most exciting material. As should be abundantly clear by now, the most exciting material is not necessarily the most significant, but the reader, unconscious as always of the confusion, automatically places most value upon what is given physical prominence in his paper. Often the events which will prove transcendently important later on are relegated to an obscure column on an inside page.

Similarly with headlines. Many people, pressed for time, follow the news exclusively through the headlines, never bothering to read even the fragmentary reports which follow them. Yet the headlines cannot possibly give an accurate summary of the news. For one thing they are so limited in space that it is a definite art to compose any headline, accurate or not, for another, they represent the ultimate refinement of the dramatic device which we have noted as being the essence of news writing. Furthermore,

many papers have the definite rule of always appearing with a block-letter streamer headline all the way across page one. Logically that would mean that every day there is one news story, and only one, which deserves such prominence. Yet who would maintain that STRAY DOG BITES THREE IN SUBURBS should arrest the attention and preoccupy the mind to the same extent that BRITAIN OFFERS INDIA FULL INDEPENDENCE should? We are back once more at the same complaint—that the exigencies, real or imaginary, of newspaper production give the reader a most dangerously distorted view of what is going on in the world.

Why *dangerously*? For these two reasons, which actually are different sides of the same coin. In their unremitting attempt to make their newspapers interesting, not once in a while, but every day without exception, editors and writers grossly exaggerate the true importance of many of the events they report. Probably the gravest danger this involves is in the supremely vital field of international relations. By being constantly led to believe that every small disagreement among nations not only is fraught with danger to world peace but also is evidence of the evil intentions of all countries but our own, the public is given anything but a true picture of world affairs. When it is kept in a state of excitement and suspicion, it cannot possibly develop the calm clarity of mind which is essential to the making of critical decisions.

Furthermore, the newspaper and its public are very much like the boy who was always crying "wolf" and the people who soon learned not to pay any attention to him. When a newspaper pumps artificial excitement into its every item, eventually the public catches on to the trick and becomes blasé. The reader sees a scare headline, and he thinks, "Just another newspaper story." Once in a while a story comes along which is a hundred times more important than its predecessors, one which should command the instant attention and thought of every reader. But the newspaper has no means of showing this unusual importance, it has been so much in the habit of using sensational language and headlines that those devices no longer have any special force. The reader finds that the present story is dealt with in the same terms in which hundreds of other stories have been dealt with, those earlier alarms had meant nothing, why should this one? And so he refuses to consider the latest news worthy of any special consideration. Yet this may be a moment that calls for the exercise of every modicum of intelligence which the nation can muster.

What is the answer? Complete disregard of the newspapers is certainly *not* the answer. A partial one is steadfast refusal to be guided in your thinking by a single newspaper, for even the best and most honest papers



have their prejudices. If in your city there is a genuinely Republican paper and another that is genuinely Democratic, you can make a start toward finding out the truth about local and national affairs by habitually playing one against the other. For international affairs, the best policy is to read one of the great metropolitan dailies which have seasoned staffs of foreign correspondents and commentators—the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald-Tribune*, the *Chicago Daily News*, the *Christian Science Monitor*. A quite well balanced summary of each week's news, both international and national, is found in the 'News of the Week in Review' section of the Sunday *New York Times*.

But the daily press as a whole, even including the *New York Times*, which has perhaps the best reputation for fairness and comprehensive coverage, still is conservative. While there is no widespread "conspiracy of silence" on certain matters, such as radicals love to accuse the newspapers of fostering, it is undoubtedly true that for one reason or another some important sidelights and fragments of news stories do fail to appear in even the most conscientious papers. The intelligent reader who insists upon knowing as much as can be known before he makes up his mind must also, therefore, have recourse to one of the responsible organs that specialize in publishing what the others omit to print. One was *PM*, which was an everpresent gadfly at the flank of its more august New York contemporaries. It not only printed much material that they omitted but also took constant delight in pointing out their inaccuracies and biases. Others are the weekly liberal journals, the *Nation* and the *New Republic*. These periodicals are frankly edited from a certain 'point of view', they are as biased in their own way as the large dailies are in another way. One can take their editorial opinions or let them alone. But like *PM*, they do supply some significant material which other papers fail to print.

The intelligent citizen reader, in a word, must maintain the scientific attitude toward information which will enable him to make up his mind. In the first place, he must seek to accumulate all that he can, and in the second place, once that material is accumulated, he must test it for accuracy. He must take into account all the various means by which objective truth may be distorted in its passage through the news making process. When he makes up his mind, he must be as sure as any reasonable man can be that his data are free from prejudice of whatever sort—that they represent things as they are, not things as publishers and editors and the people behind them wish him to believe they are. Honest search for the truth of the news is an arduous and often most disheartening labor, but no one can be an intelligent American citizen without committing himself permanently to that quest.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What does Altick believe are the effects of the fact that newspapers are businesses on accurate dissemination of information?
- 2 How does he say news is colored by the choice of words? By the selection and emphasis on details?
- 3 What are some of the undesirable effects of newspaperese? Of "news angles"? Of fragmentary quotations from speeches? Of the importance of the front page? Of the brevity of headlines?
- 4 What dangers does he believe exist in the handling of international news?
- 5 What suggestions does Altick make to the person who wants to be well informed?
- 6 Point out at least four ways in which Altick makes transitions between paragraphs

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Do you think that readers of newspapers are as seriously misled as Altick suggests?
- 2 Is it wrong for newspapers to color news so as to favor one side or the other in a controversy or a political contest?
- 3 Is it wrong for a newspaper to distort the news in the interest of what it considers a praiseworthy cause?
- 4 What is wrong with a simple mistrust of all news on subjects likely to be controversial?
- 5 What do you think has caused the rise of columnists with their inside stories and definite points of view?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 How to allow for a newspaper's bias
- 2 Misleading headlines
- 3 The worst newspaper columnist
- 4 Comparison of the handling of the same event by different papers (or by different wire services)

## JOHN CROSBY

born 1912 was a reporter for the New York Herald Tribune from 1935 to 1941 and is now a widely syndicated radio columnist [Reprinted with permission from LIFE, November 6 1950, Copyright 1950 by Time Incorporated]

## Seven Deadly Sins of the Air

Television, a young giant which does not yet know its own strength, has become a member of eight million American homes Eventually

despite delaying battles over color television, it will be in all of them, upsetting the household like any young obstreperous child. While it is still in its infancy, it might be well to lay down some rules about its table manners. If we value our sanity, we had better elevate television's deportment to a level much higher than that of its parent, radio.

Radio, of course, had many conspicuous virtues and seldom let us forget any of them. In 1926 it was the poor immigrant of the arts. By 1950 it had risen to fame and wealth, earned roughly \$500 million a year and had built a shrine to broadcasting, Radio City, to which millions of Americans made pilgrimages every year to pay homage to Mary Margaret McBride. It penetrated into 42 million American homes and brought Americans the renowned voices of incoming Presidents, outgoing kings and Arthur Godfrey—to list them, more or less, in the reverse order of their importance. But radio, rich and powerful as it was, had some grave flaws in its character and, if the public and especially the broadcaster are not alerted in time, television will inherit all of them. Radio had a lot to answer for, which might be lumped under the heading of its Seven Deadly Sins.

### (1) RADIO SOLD ITS SOUL TO THE ADVERTISER

Broadcasting sold its beautiful white body to the advertiser before it was old enough to know what it was doing. Radio, of course, is not the only medium supported by advertising, but it is the only one owned outright by it. Newspapers and magazines take money from the advertiser too. Their product—some of it good, some of it awful—belongs to them and is controlled by them. In radio it is the other way around.

This situation is not entirely the fault of the broadcaster. Back in 1926, when radio first went commercial on a large scale, the advertiser came nosing around, trying to buy time as he would buy space on a billboard. But broadcasting then was largely in the hands of the engineers who were far more interested in producing a signal that could be heard clearly in Brooklyn than what that signal carried. These men had little experience or sympathy with show business. After a bit the advertiser got sick of hanging around waiting and he went ahead and produced his own programs which radio stations were only too happy to broadcast in exchange for a certain amount of legal tender. So the advertiser—however reluctantly—got into show business up to his elbows, and the television broadcaster will have a hell of a time getting him out of there.

Well, the average advertising man is naturally attempting to sell the most goods to the most people. He feels—quite logically—that it is none of his business to fill a niche in broadcasting which everyone else is neglecting. In spite of a lot of clamor to the contrary, the advertiser

doesn't give a hoot about putting on the air what the public wants to hear Four years ago Paul Lazarsfeld of Columbia University revealed in a national survey that 50% of American women loathed soap opera While gratifying the rather astonishing taste of the 50% of women who like soap opera, the advertiser failed utterly to put anything on the air to appeal to the 50% of women who hated it Their radios stayed off all day, radio lost more than half of its daytime audience and ruined its daytime programming structure

If television is not to follow this path which, in the long run, is ruinous to its own best interests, it must run its own shop In this regard it is encouraging to note that the Columbia Broadcasting System, in its 1949 year-end report, revealed that the network owned more than 30 hours of its 45 hours a week of network TV shows There are many other signs that television will be far less subservient to the advertiser than was radio The extent of that subservience is best illustrated by a story M H Aylesworth, first president of NBC, tells on himself Years ago Aylesworth, the most important executive in broadcasting at the time, used to dance—actually dance—to the piping of the president of the American Tobacco Company The late George Washington Hill used to drop in to his office while the Lucky Strike Dance Orchestra was on the air and make Aylesworth dance with a feminine member of the NBC staff to make sure the tempo was right for dancing It is doubtful whether William S Paley would submit to such an indignity today And it's high time

## (2) RADIO NEVER FULLY EXPLOITED ITS ENORMOUS POTENTIALITIES

Back in the '20s, Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover hailed radio as the greatest potential purveyor of news, music, culture, education and entertainment of all time But radio never lived up to this bright promise Its growth was stunted by the success of a few formulas the big comedians like Jack Benny, the family comedy like Henry Aldrich, the soap opera, the whodunit, the audience-participation show, the dramatization of successful movies, the quiz show, and so on Five hours of soap opera in the daytime and four hours—block programming is the official name for it—of whodunits at night. Amnesia in the afternoon and death in the evening. Radio did its best to make neurotics out of a whole generation of housewives with its soap operas alone, an endless succession of unfortunate heroines stricken with hysterical blindness Hysterical blindness, incidentally, is one of the rarest ailments known to mankind but, at one time, half of the soap-opera heroines on the air came down with it at once as if it were measles (One of them contracted it by eating chocolate cake)

The lack of balance in radio's programming, however, is not so much of a sin of commission as one of omission. Radio's contribution to education, from which so much was expected, was practically nonexistent. The best the broadcaster could do was to plant four intellectuals around a table. One of them would lift a forefinger and say, "I think." The man across the table would lift his forefinger and say, "I disagree." Whenever he was accused of neglecting—some critics went so far as to accuse him of debasing—the culture of his country, the broadcaster retorted that he had broadcast at one time or other virtually all the world's great books and plays. He had, too—usually around midnight when the clientele was in bed.

It is depressing to note that television has already gone hog wild over one formula—the vaudeville show. Everyone is trying to be Milton Berle. There is only one Milton Berle, and a great many people think that's one too many. Still, the nation's TV screens are filled from 8 to 11 night after night with imitation Milton Berles and an interminable procession of torch singers and tap dancers, interspersed with what appears to be the same dog act. If that dog ever died, the \$350 million television industry would be in a fix.

Television is a far more versatile medium than radio and too important a national asset to be given over exclusively to soft shoe routines. The television broadcaster should determine in his own mind the importance—not the popularity but the importance—of the various types of programs he is capable of presenting. One of the most popular features of a newspaper is the comic strip, but no editor would dream of filling the whole newspaper with them.

### (3) RADIO CONSISTENTLY PANDERED TO THE LOWEST TASTES AND ALMOST IGNORED THE HIGHEST

As a mass medium radio had to try to please all sorts of ages and incomes and cultural levels at the same time. Eventually, though, its passion for bigness became a megalomania. It aimed so diligently at the lowest common denominator of society that it never squarely hit any level at all.

By so conducting its operations, radio earned the contempt of the educated and cultivated people of the land. This comparatively small group exerts an influence far out of proportion to its numbers. These people, whom radio ignored, own and operate industry. They edit the newspapers. They write the books and plays. They imprimatur their scorn on all levels of society. And, while the American people listened to radio in vast numbers, they never quite respected it.

To get rid of this regrettable heritage the TV broadcaster should call

attention to the fact that he has put on the air many things besides Hop-along Cassidy. He ought to remind the folks that he has televised *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Dybbuk*, *The Copperhead*, *Dear Brutus*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Barchester Towers* and scores of the greatest books and plays of all time. Neither the stage nor the movies can claim so distinguished a roster in so short a space of time. Yet television is considered a moronic form of entertainment simply because it became fashionable to regard any form of broadcasting as moronic, which shows how dangerous it is to ignore the minority groups of the American public.

#### (4) RADIO WAS MORALLY IRRESPONSIBLE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Television is either going to elevate American tastes—or it's going to debase them. It's not going to leave them alone. The radio broadcaster, prodded from behind by a slick public-relations man, used to protest that radio was the mirror of the American people, that, if you criticized radio, you criticized the American people. It was a very clever and very specious argument. But it was not the responsibility of the listener to request something he had never heard of. It was radio's—and it is now television's responsibility to improve its own product. Granted that the competitive situation was different, the automobile industry didn't produce the selfstarter only after it was suggested by a disgruntled automobile buyer. Similarly the housewife is not going to outline for the benefit of the TV industry any bright new ideas for a television program. The industry will have to do its own creative thinking.

Radio derived enormous, and I think wholly false, satisfaction from counting heads and assuming unwarrantably that they were contented heads. No matter what television puts on the air, it is going to have an enormous audience, and the TV broadcaster had better not mistake this fact—as did the radio broadcaster—as automatic proof that he is doing a wonderful job. Every TV program will inform or educate or morally elevate or emotionally stimulate a lot of people. Or it will deceive or degrade or hypnotize them. It won't leave them unscathed. The broadcaster's responsibility therefore is an imposing one. He should judge every one of his programs—as well as his over-all program structure—with one thing in mind: it will do a great many people some good or it will do a great many people some harm.

In order to do this, television must develop some personal standards of excellence, which is something radio never did. Radio borrowed its standards from other media and, in those cases where there weren't any earlier standards to fall back on, it didn't have any. According to this

method of operation, a great radio play was simply the dramatization of a good movie, a good book or a good play. Some of the best radio dramas were written solely for radio but because they had not received the prior endorsement of a book, a movie or a theater critic, the industry looked down upon them as not quite respectable. If television is ever to amount to anything of cultural importance, it should rid itself of the idea that it's the motion picture industry, the book business or the stage. It's a big, new art form of its own. It was radio's lack of standards that led to that dizzy lunacy known as the giveaway program. Radio programs gave away washing machines, Cadillacs, \$1,000 bills, houses—everything, in fact, except women. I could never quite understand that lone omission. If Bert Parks had thrown a beautiful 18-year old babe into the jackpot of *Stop The Music*, even I would have stayed home and listened for the telephone. But he wouldn't. Some faint moral scruple—or conceivably fear of the Federal Communications Commission—stayed the broadcaster from this final depravity. The Roman emperors who gave the populace bread and circuses—which is what radio was imitating with its giveaway programs—also threw in sexual orgies, and it always seemed to me inconsistent of the broadcasters not to follow through with the thing. I brought this to the attention of several vice presidents, but they failed to see any humor in the suggestion. They also failed to see anything wrong with the giveaway program, which shows where a lack of moral standards leads.

The television boys could have an enormous and somewhat similar type of success with another type of program—the strip tease. The way I see this program—I'm just thinking off the top of my head here, Mannie—we'll get a pretty dame in front of the camera and have her take off one lone, solitary garment a week, taking her time, of course. At the end of 39 weeks—just by coincidence she'll be wearing 39 articles of apparel—I positively, absolutely guarantee we'll have a Hooperating twice as big as Milton Berle's. And if any bluenose society comes nosing around, we can always tell them that, after all, every member of our audience is an American and that any criticism of our program is a criticism of the American people. I tell you, Mannie, it can't miss.

## (5) RADIO WAS AVARICIOUS

A man who wants to start a newspaper or magazine—and has enough money to do it—starts one and keeps it going as long as the public wants it. If he wants to start a radio station, though, it's different. Radio stations are limited by the number of broadcasting frequencies. And by the law established in 1934 the FCC allots those frequencies "in the public interest, convenience or necessity." The FCC doesn't give the broadcasters

those frequencies, each station is merely loaned the frequency on its promise to use it in the best interests of the listeners who are its real owners. That's the law, but you wouldn't know it from listening to the radio. While a few stations, such as New York City's WNYC and many of the 100-odd educational stations, are publicly owned, the vast majority of stations are privately owned and operated. And although these stations have their frequencies on loan, they seem to regard them in the same manner as they do the microphones and the washrooms. The promises made to FCC by the applicants for frequencies make very funny reading in the light of their subsequent performances. In fact, for all practical purposes, the broadcaster does own his frequency, once he has gotten it.

Many sizable fortunes were made in radio. In 24 years the advertiser poured billions of dollars into radio. Where did it go? Well, let's take the \$500 million annual income and slice it up. In the first place, 15% of it, or \$75 million, went into the pockets of the advertising agencies, which is enough to keep an awful lot of ad men's wives in mink for some time. Now what did the advertising men do to earn that \$75 million? Well, a lot of them worked very hard for it, of course, assembling the whole show. But there is also a very pleasant way to "assemble a show" that quickly became popular. This method, which now constitutes about 15% of the programs, is the package deal. Rather than strain his own mind producing a show, the advertiser simply found a package producer. If the package happened to be *Information Please*, he paid as much as \$11,000 a week for what cost its owner, Dan Golenpaul, from \$5,000 to \$7,500 to produce. For consummating this deal the ad men made about 15% of the cost, or \$64,350 for the year—a 39-week year. He didn't *net* this, of course, because he had to pay out a lot of it for such things as his fixed expenses, liaison between the package producer and the sponsor and advertising the program. Just the same, say he grossed \$64,350. That's still an awfully nice gross.

Young couples like Dorothy Kilgallen and Dick Kollmar cleared as much as \$100,000 a year for chattering over their breakfast cups about the people they'd seen the night before. Writers got \$2,000 a week in Hollywood for copying down Fred Allen's jokes and putting them on [another]'s program. The offices of network vice presidents began to look like something out of the Palazzo Venezia, and network presidents, in order to be properly differentiated from their vice presidents, had to add wainscoted private dining rooms with their own kitchens. There would be nothing especially wrong with this opulence, but radio, after all, is a semipublic institution, so it has a responsibility to the public to produce at least some programs that are in the best interests of the public.

Both the advertiser and the broadcaster had plenty of money to put a



new idea or a new personality on the air and keep it there until the public accepted it. Rarely was this done. The old faces—the Jack Bennys and Fred Allens and Amos 'n' Andys—got richer, and there were no new faces and no new ideas. In the end this dollar worship proved almost disastrous. When Jack Benny was lured from NBC to CBS by the promise of more dollars (2.3 million of them, to be exact), NBC's entire program structure almost fell apart.

As things now look, there will be far fewer channels for television stations than there were for radio. These channels are national assets and they should be treated as such both by you and me, who own them, and by the broadcaster who is permitted to exploit them.

#### (6) RADIO CREATED AN INSULTING PICTURE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The broadcaster and the advertising man never got to know the American people very well. They genuflected to the most clamorous and idiotic elements of America. The letter writers, for example. Mae West once appeared on the Charlie McCarthy program and let fly a few remarks which appeared to be out of bounds. The repercussion shook NBC to its foundations. Yet when the smoke had cleared away it developed that only 15,000 persons, not all of them angry, had written in about the broadcast—out of an audience of roughly 20 million. It was difficult to explain to the broadcaster that most Americans don't write letters. They turn the damn thing off and go bowling.

Then there was the studio audience—Americans all—who shrieked with laughter and applauded like maniacs at the most feeble witticisms. After all, they had been let in free and they were encouraged and, in some cases, almost forced to show their appreciation. The studio audience was brought into radio by Ed Wynn and Eddie Cantor, a couple of veterans of the stage, who couldn't function without it. Immediately the subtleties of the pioneer radio comedians—Stoopnagle and Budd and the early audienceless *Amos n' Andy*—were drowned in a torrent of boffolos which were provoked by a much lower level of humor. The introduction of this audience which stood between the entertainer and his real audience—two or three people in a living room—was one of the most lamentable mistakes ever made by radio.

Another reason why radio so profoundly misunderstood the American people can be ascribed to its points of origin. At the start some of the radio programs emanated from Chicago, Cincinnati and a host of other communities. When radio grew rich and successful it settled immovably in New York and Hollywood, two of the least characteristic cities in the country. Radio became a troglodyte. About 70% of the costliest and

most important programs emanated from Hollywood, a city so far removed from the main stream of American life that the listener had to have a special frame of reference to understand the jokes. The smog, the irresponsibility of the Los Angeles motorists, Cucamonga. That was the stuff of which radio spun its dreams. It was not only trivia, it was *local* trivia.

Television is still young and some of its best programs are coming from Chicago, Philadelphia and Washington—as well as from New York and Hollywood. It would be to television's best interests, to say nothing of ours, if a fair share of its programs came from and represented all parts of the country. Above all, television shouldn't spend too much time in southern California. It will get orange-juice poisoning (softening of the brain).

### (7) RADIO WAS COWARDLY

With exception of its first Deadly Sin, radio's seventh was the worst of all. Rich and influential as was radio, it was the most timid medium of them all. Radio was afraid to offend the Negroes, the Irish, the Jews or the Women's Bowling League of East Orange, N.J. Hugh Johnson wasn't allowed to broadcast a script that discussed syphilis for fear it might ruffle the sensibilities of some bluenose society. General Johnson wasn't *for* syphilis, either. The only group radio ever stood up to was the atheists. Atheists were never allowed time on the air because the broadcaster was afraid God couldn't stand criticism.

Politeness is all very well but the thing can be carried too far. Sheer inoffensiveness is so small a virtue as to be no virtue at all. No one ever accomplished anything in this world without stepping on some body's toes. The FCC has now given the broadcaster the right to harbor opinions. For God's sake, fellows, harbor some and hold to them. There are many times when the American people need and deserve censure. Go ahead and censure them. No man will turn you off. He'll think you're talking about the man next door.

Radio's timidity colored most of its programs. "Here is Joe Doakes, your friendly announcer." "The voice with the smile." "And here is your host." "Your friend and mine." For heaven's sake, television, don't be so friendly to just everybody. Lots of people aren't entitled to your friendship. Don't play host to everyone who comes along and don't smile *all* the time. There are times when the voice with a scowl is more appropriate and far more courageous.

One final word. Just because I dwelt at such length on radio's faults, I'd like to make it clear that I am not unaware of radio's virtues. It has many of them. But this, after all, is about radio's Seven Deadly Sins.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. Contrast advertising control of radio with advertising influence upon newspapers as discussed by Altick. Does Crosby's account seem somewhat superficial? Why?
2. What are some evidences of what Crosby calls radio's lack of responsibility?
3. What is Crosby's point with respect to public ownership of radio and television channels?
4. To what does Crosby attribute the failure of radio to understand the American people?
5. What good points about TV does Crosby recognize? Does his harsh judgment of radio seem justified to you?
6. What constructive advice to TV does Crosby give? Are there evidences that his advice (and that of many others with similar ideas) is being followed?
7. Crosby writes in a flippant, witty, exaggerated manner. Are his objections any less serious because of his style? Does wit destroy earnestness and responsibility of appeal?

## FOR DISCUSSION

1. To what extent do you feel broadcasters should yield to various pressure groups? Does freedom of the air give the right to offend? Analyze Crosby's arguments on this point. Is he asking TV to step on toes? What sort of courage does he want?
2. Why is it a specious argument that if you criticize radio you criticize the American people?
3. What signs has television shown of avoiding the things which Crosby criticizes in radio? What signs of repeating them?
4. Do you believe that it is true that people get as good programs as they want—that radio and TV will only improve with public demand?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. Why soap operas are (or are not) justified.
2. The services of TV to public understanding of politics
3. Television as an art form
4. An outstanding show on TV (or radio)
5. What TV can do best

## AL CAPP

born 1909, created the comic strip character El Abner in 1934 and has kept him alive ever since. He has also produced *The Al Capp Show* for NBC, has lectured at Harvard and other universities and has contributed to national magazines. In 1948 he received a Presidential citation for his work in vocational rehabilitation. [Reprinted with permission from *LIFE* March 31, 1952. Copyright, 1952 Time Incorporated.]

## "It's Hideously True"

You may, unless you had something better to do, have been reading my comic strip *Li'l Abner* this week. If so, you are probably startled to see that my hero is apparently being married to one Daisy Mae Scragg. This time it's the real thing. Yes, after 18 years the poor lout is finally, hopelessly married, and in one of Marryin' Sam's cheapest, most humiliating weddings.

I never intended to do this. My comic-strip characters are not the kind who grow through boyhood and adolescence, get married and raise their own kids. The Yokums of Dogpatch are the same sweet and brainless characters they always were. And the fact that Abner always managed somehow to escape Daisy Mae's warm, eager arms provided me with a story that I could tell whenever I couldn't think of anything better. Frankly, I intended to go through life happily and heartlessly betraying you decent, hopeful people who want to see things come out right. I never intended to have *Li'l Abner* marry Daisy Mae because your pathetic hope that I would was one of the main reasons you 50 million romance lovers read my strip.

For the first few years it was easy to fool you, you didn't know me well then. You followed developments eagerly, trustfully. When I met any of you, I was asked, "When will *Li'l Abner* marry Daisy Mae?" in a friendly, hopeful tone. Later, as I betrayed your hopes in more and more outrageous ways, your tone became a little bitter. One year I had Daisy Mae marry a tree trunk, thinking that Abner was hiding inside it. Next day, naturally, it turned out that the contents were an old pair of socks, but that Daisy's marriage to them was irrevocably legal. That was a pretty problem. Your tone became threatening. Later on I poisoned her, and Abner consented to marry her because it was her dying wish (Why not? She would be safely dead in a minute anyway), but just as you thought the wedding had finally taken place, I let her drink some of Dogpatch's sizzling superfluid, 'Kickapoo Joy Juice,' which instantly restored her to life, so Abner was no longer bound by his promise. You still asked me when they would *really* marry, but your tone was a little more threatening. Then I let Daisy ecstatically marry a boy who not only turned out to be merely Abner's double but a bigamist too, so even that marriage didn't count. Now your tone was downright mutinous, and your question went something like 'For God's sake, will Abner *EVER* marry Daisy Mae?' Just the same, I knew you would still keep watching and waiting. This was the kind of suspense I needed to keep you reading my comic strip, so, no matter how impatient or indignant you got, I never intended to let your foolish, romantic dreams come true.

So why did I do it this week? Why, after all these years of tricking you, did I finally trick myself? Well, the real reason isn't as simple as Abner, Daisy or even suspense. To understand why I have done this awful thing you will have to bear with me while I explain how and why I created them in the first place.

When I was in my early 20s and about to start a comic strip, I found myself in a terrible dilemma. The funny comic strip, the kind I wanted to do, was vanishing from the funny page. A frightening new thing had been discovered—namely, that you could sell more papers by worrying people than by amusing them. Comic strips which had no value except that they were comic were beginning to vanish from the funny papers. Rube Goldberg's dazed *Mike and Ike*, Fred Opper's *Happy Hooligan*, who wore a tomato can on his head, Milt Gross's *Count Screwloose*, who regularly escaped from the booby hatch only to return to it because things were more normal there—this beloved procession of clowns, innocents and cheerful imbeciles—slowly faded. In their place came a sobbing, screaming, shooting parade of the new "comic"-strip characters: an orphan who talked like the Republican platform of 1920, a prizefighter who advised children that brains were better than brawn while beating the brains out of his physically inferior opponents, detectives who explored and explained every sordid and sickening byway of crime and then made it all okay by concluding that these attractively blueprinted crimes didn't really pay, and girl reporters who were daily threatened with rape and mutilation.

Don't get me wrong. I was terrified by the emergence of this new kind of comic strip 18 years ago only because I didn't have the special qualities they required—not because they didn't have quality. *Dick Tracy* is a magnificently drawn, exquisitely written shocker comparable, in its own terms, with Poe. But "suspense" strips, though enormously effective, disdain fun and fantasy. Suspense was what editors wanted when I was ready to create my own comic strip—but all I could do was fun and fantasy.

#### GOOD 'UNS AND BAD 'UNS

So I tried to draw straight-faced suspense comic strips. I tried to create smart and superior heroes, and submerged them in blood-curdling tragedies, increasing in complexity, hopelessness and horror and thereby creating reader anxiety, nausea and terror—*i.e.*, suspense. But I couldn't do it. I just couldn't believe in them. The suspense strips require one-dimensional characters: good guys and bad guys, and no fooling around with anything in between. I simply couldn't believe in my one-dimensional good guys and bad guys—as I drew them. I discovered good things in the bad guys, and vice versa. So my hero turned

out to be big and strong like the suspense-strip heroes, but he also turned out to be stupid, as big, strong heroes sometimes are. His mammy, like mine, and possibly yours, turned out to be a miracle of goodness, but at the same time she was kind of bossy, quite self-righteous and sweetly ridiculous. His girl, although wildly beautiful, is vaguely sloppy and, although infinitely virtuous, pursues him like the most unprincipled seductress.

The good people in my hero's town, possibly like those in your town, often are a pain in the neck. And the bad 'uns, like some bad 'uns in real life, are often more attractive than the good 'uns. The Scragg Boys, Lem and Luke, are fiendish when they are snatching milk from whimpering babies or burning down orphan asylums to get some light to read comic books by (only to realize that they can't read, anyway), but even the most horrified reader can't help being touched by their respectfully asking their pappy's permission to commit all this manslaughter and mayhem. Monsters they certainly are, but they are dutiful children too.

The society people in *Lil Abner* always have impressive names, but there is always something a little wrong with them too—like Henry Cabbage Cod, Daphne Degradingham, Sir Cecil Cesspool (he's deep), Peabody Fleabody and Basil Bassoon. Dumpington Van Lump seemed a harmless, hospitable kid until it developed that his favorite book was *How to Make Lampshades Out of Your Friends*. Colossal McGenius was so brilliant in giving business advice that he seemed to be justified in charging \$1,000 a word for talking to worried tycoons, but it turned out that his weakness was telling long, involved jokes (at \$1,000 a word) about three Bulgarians, whereupon he remembered, much too late, that they were actually three *Persians*, and so he had to start the story all over again. When he finally got to the advice it was great, but by that time the tycoon had gone bankrupt.

When I introduced a mythical country, Lower Slobberia, I was as technical as the straightest suspense-strip creator, and gave readers a map. The map was perfectly reasonable except that the names of its parts created some distrust and disrespect for the country. The oceans were the Hotlantic and Pitziffic, and there was another body of water called the Gulf of Pincus. The capital, Ceaser Siddy, home of Good King Nogoodnik, was flanked by the twin cities of Tsk-Tsk and Tch-Tch. Its leading citizens had familiar and famous, but somehow embarrassing, names like Douglas Snowbanks Jr., Harry S. Rasputintruman and Clark Bagle. Everything in *Lil Abner* was my effort to be as straight as the straight strips, but colored, however, with my conviction that nothing is ever entirely straight, entirely good, entirely bad, and that everything is a little ridiculous. As in the straight suspense strips, I dutifully created the

standard, popular suspense situations, but something forced me to carry them so far that terror became absurdity

For instance, when the Yokums make gigantic sacrifices for what they are convinced is a noble and beneficial cause, the reader knows they are swindling themselves, even victory will benefit only the enemy. When the Yokums are being heroes they are being not only heroes—they are being damned fools at the same time. When their adversaries are being villainous, they are not only vile, they are also confused and frightened.

*Li! Abner had to come out that way, because that's the way things seem to me. Well, it happened to make a big hit. It was a success because it was something I hadn't thought much about as such. It was a satire. Nobody had done one quite in these terms before. I was delighted that I had. I was exhilarated by the privilege this gave me to kid hell out of everything.*

### GOOD OLD JACK S

It was wonderful while it lasted, and I had no reason for marrying Abner off to Daisy Mae. But then something happened that threatens to shackle me and my kind of comic strip. It is what I call the gradual loss of our fifth freedom. Without it, the other four freedoms aren't much fun, because the fifth is the freedom to laugh at each other.

My kind of comic strip finds its fun wherever there is lunacy, and *American life is rich in lunacy everywhere you look. I created labor-hating leaders, money-foolish financiers, and Senator Jack S ("Good old Jack S") Phogbound. When highway billboard advertising threatened to create a coast-to-coast iron curtain between the American motorist and the beautiful American countryside, I got some humorous situations out of that too. Race-hate peddlers gave me some of my juiciest comedy characters, and I had the Yokums tell them what I know is true, that all races are God's children, equally beloved by their Father. For the first 14 years I reveled in the freedom to laugh at America. But now America has changed. The humorist feels the change more, perhaps, than anyone. Now there are things about America we can't kid.*

I realized it first when four years ago I created the Shmoo. You remember the Shmoo? It was a totally boneless and wildly affectionate little animal which, when broiled, came out steak and, when fried, tasted like chicken. It also laid neatly packaged and bottled eggs and milk, all carefully labeled "Grade A." It multiplied without the slightest effort. It loved to be eaten, and would drop dead, out of sheer joy, when you looked at it hungrily. Having created the animal, I let it run wild in the world of my cartoon strip. *It was simply a fairy tale and all I had to say*

was wouldn't it be wonderful if there were such an animal and, if there were, how idiotically some people might behave. Mainly, the response to the Shmoo was delight. But there were also some disturbing letters. Some writers wanted to know what was the idea of kidding big business, by creating the Shmoo (which had *become* big business). Other writers wanted to know what was the idea of criticizing labor, by creating the Shmoo, which made labor unnecessary.

It was disturbing, but I didn't let it bother me too much. Then a year later, I created the Kigmy, an animal that loved to be kicked around, thus making it unnecessary for people to kick each other around. This time a lot more letters came. Their tone was angrier, more suspicious. They asked the craziest questions, like: Was I, in creating the Kigmy, trying to create pacifism and thus, secretly, nonresistance to Communism? Were the Kigmy kickers secretly the big bosses kicking the workers around? Were the Kigmy kickers secretly the labor unions kicking capital around? And finally, what in hell was the idea of creating the Kigmy anyhow, because it implied some criticism of some kinds of Americans and any criticism of anything American was (now) un-American? I was astounded to find it had become unpopular to laugh at any fellow Americans. In fact, when I looked around, I realized that a new kind of humorist had taken over, the humorist who kidded nothing but himself. That was the only thing left. Hollywood had stopped making ain't-America-wonderful-and-ridiculous movies, and was making ain't-America-wonderful-but-anyone-who-says-it's-ridiculous-too-deserves-to-be-picketed movies. Radio, the most instantly obedient to pressure of all media, had sensed the atmosphere, an atmosphere in which Jack Benny is magnificent but in which Will Rogers would have suffocated.

So that was when I decided to go back to fairy tales until the atmosphere is gone. That is the real reason why Li'l Abner married Daisy Mae. At least for the time being, I can't create any more Shmoos, any more Kigmies, and when Senator Phogbound turns up now, I have to explain carefully that, heavens-to-Betsy, goodness-no, he's not typical, nobody like THAT ever holds public office. After a decade and a half of using my characters as merely reasons to swing my searchlight on America, I began all over again to examine them, as people. Frankly, I was delighted with them. (Frankly, I'm delighted with nearly everything I do. The one in the room who laughs loudest at my own jokes or my own comic strip is me.) I became reacquainted with Li'l Abner as a human being, with Daisy Mae as an agonizingly frustrated girl. I began to wonder myself what it would be like if they were ever married. The more I thought about it, the more complicated and disastrous and, therefore, irresistible, the idea became.



## WILL THEY LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER?

For instance, L'il Abner has never willingly kissed any female except his mother and a pig. Well—if he got married, he'd *have* to. Even he couldn't avoid it for more than a month or so. What would happen? Would he approve of kissing? Would he say anything good about it? (And thus make it popular with millions of red blooded young Americans whose "ideal" he is.) Would he do it again? As a bachelor he is frankly a bum. He just sleeps, eats and goes catfishing. As a married man he would have to support his own household. How would he do it? Is there anybody stupid enough to hire someone as stupid as he is? Is there any profession that requires as little intelligence as he has? And how about Mammy Yokum? She has always ruled Abner with an iron fist. Would she continue to after he has his own home? And how would Daisy Mae take this? Sure, she's been sweet and docile with Mammy Yokum all these years, but that might only have been because she needed her help in trapping Abner. Now that he's her'n, will she show her true colors and tangle with Mammy for the lightweight championship of the new Yokum home? How about babies? Married people frequently have babies. Would *they* have a baby? Will he really be born on the Fourth of July? Is it possible that they'd name him Yankee Doodle Yokum? Babies have uncles. Could I freeze the blood of the entire nation by having Mammy Yokum (who can accomplish anything, even singlehanded) produce a baby of her own, five minutes after L'il Yankee Doodle Yokum was born? Would this child be known as Uncle Yokum?

And how about Sadie Hawkins Day? It has become a national holiday. It's my responsibility. It doesn't happen on any set day in November, it happens on the day I say it happens. I get tens of thousands of letters from colleges, communities and church groups, starting around July, asking me *what* day, so they can make plans. Well, Sadie Hawkins Day has always revolved around L'il Abner fearing to marry Daisy Mae. Now that his worst fears have come hideously true, what will he and Daisy Mae do on Sadie Hawkins Day? Will Lower Slobbovia inaugurate its own "Sadie Huckins Day" and import L'il Abner and Daisy Mae as technical advisers? In short, once Abner and Daisy Mae are married, do they live happily forever after like other people, or is this just the beginning of even more complicated disasters, more unbearable miseries? They are married, all right. But if you think the future is serene for them, you're ('Haw! Haw!') living in a fool's paradise.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. On what principle does Capp say he made up the characters in "L'il Abner"?

2. How does Capp justify calling his comic strip a satire?
3. What made Capp believe that "it had become unpopular to laugh at any fellow Americans"?
4. Does he actually reveal why he had Li'l Abner marry Daisy Mae?
5. How is Capp indirectly indicting comics in general?
6. What is significant about Capp's people and place names?
7. Is the article a satire too?

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. What would you judge is Capp's attitude toward life and people?
2. Do you think that the article contains serious points which may not be quite apparent on the surface? What remarks might so indicate?
3. In what ways is "Li'l Abner" different from most other comic strips?
4. How valid is Capp's suggestion that Americans have grown afraid to laugh at themselves?
5. In what ways can comics create false values and contribute to crime and to juvenile delinquency?
6. Do you think comics should be censored? On what standards? How?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. Unfunny comic strips
2. Should adults be ashamed of reading comics?
3. The differences between comic strips and comic books.
4. My favorite comic strip.
5. Americans know how (do not know how) to laugh at themselves.

## BUDD SCHULBERG

born 1914, American author, is a graduate of Dartmouth College. He has written for the screen in Hollywood and is the author of short stories and articles in leading magazines. His recent screenplay, *On the Waterfront*, received an Academy Award for 1954. His fiction includes *What Makes Sammy Run*, *The Disenchanted*, and *Some Faces in the Crowd*, a collection of short stories. [Movies in America After Fifty Years, Copyright, 1947 by the Atlantic Monthly Company, Boston 16, Massachusetts. Reprinted by permission of the author, who supplied a postscript especially for this volume.]

## *Movies in America After Fifty Years*

### I

Fade in. Koster and Bial's Music Hall in New York City, fifty years ago. A curious but apprehensive audience has crowded into the

small vaudeville theater to see the first public exhibition of movies in America. Defying gloomy predictions that the projector would explode, that the flickering images would ruin eyesight, and that delinquent elements would take advantage of the darkness to pick pockets or even—God forbid!—force their attentions on defenseless young ladies, the intrepid spectators edge forward in their seats. They are rewarded—as the *New York Times* will report next morning—with “living pictures of two precious blonde young persons of the variety stage doing the umbrella dance with commendable celerity . . . a burlesque boxing match between a tall, thin comedian and a short, fat one . . . an instant of motion in Hoyt’s farce, ‘A Milk White Flag,’ repeated over and over again all wonderfully real and singularly exhilarating.”

Americans had begun to discover their favorite form of entertainment. Two generations have been sufficient time to map the boundaries of this more cowardly than brave new world. But after fifty years this great new continent of the arts remains as unexplored as central Greenland.

In 1900, hundreds of thousands were introduced to movies when vaudeville managers used them to break the first theatrical strike. But the return of the rebellious actors left the movies out in the cold, a homeless child of four. The displaced medium was taken in by penny arcade owners who added films to the shooting galleries, the midgets, and the traffic in French postcards. Whereas in France the approach of the pioneer Méliès was closer to that of artists in more established media, in America the movie was a gutter child growing up without guidance or traditions in an atmosphere of opportunistic commercialization of the cheap thrill. It’s been a long, impressive climb from those crummy arcades to magnificent cinematic cathedrals like the Music Hall. But psychologists will tell you it’s the first ten years that mold our characters, and it could be that this applies to our films as well. For despite their spectacular development in technique and the occasional film of real beauty, it may be that they have yet to outgrow their penny-arcade origin and point of view.

By the end of the first decade of nickelodeons, millions had caught the movie habit without the slightest realization that they were watching the development of a new art-form, destined not only to be the most popular but perhaps even the most advanced yet discovered in man’s restless, endless search for new means of self-expression and entertainment.

Americans, scorned so long for their indifference to the seven traditional arts, can lay claim to a major role in creating the eighth. It was Edward Muybridge who first proved to a skeptical public at the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893 that pictures could be made to move. Edison, Latham, and other American scientists developed the principle of film

projection Edwin S. Porter, an Edison mechanic drafted as a cameraman, created the first realistic storytelling films and indicated, with *The Life of an American Fireman* and *The Great Train Robbery*, the new medium's dramatic potential. An unsuccessful playwright so ashamed of the profession into which exigency had forced him that for years he hid behind a pseudonym, D. W. Griffith staged a one-man revolution in cinematic technique. The close-up, intercutting for dramatic suspense, dramatic lighting, the moving (or trucking) shot, the flash-back, and the breakdown of a scene into brief individual but component shots spliced together to a dramatically rhythmic plan—these are only a few of Griffith's innovations which accelerated the development not only of American films, but of French, German, Russian, and Italian as well. To this day the French call a close shot *plan américain*, and the Italians, *piano americano*.

The monumental comitragedies of Chaplin, the vigorous absurdities of Sennett, Walt Disney's animated world of fantasy, and some memorable films from such directors as Von Stroheim, Murnau, Vidor, Ford, Milestone, Wyler—in the long run these remarkably mature achievements for an infant art may balance the sins of tastelessness, unimaginativeness, and artistic amorality a majority of American film makers have committed systematically for generations.

These offenders have taken an instrument as sensitive, as delicately balanced, as capable of indescribable beauty and subtle emotion as the finest Steinway, they have set themselves in front of the keyboard before the largest audience in the history of the world—and have proceeded to play chopsticks.

For, with half a century of motion picture exhibition behind us, it is high time we were honest with ourselves and our great machine for making art. Hollywood finishes at least one feature-length picture every day of the year, and six of the seven turned out each week are just plain chopsticks, the same tune everybody knows, repeated in a repeated series of repetitions.

How can it be that the only nation in the world with a tradition of popular education produces 98 million movie-goers a week who happily keep on paying their two bits, four bits, six bits (and sometimes three times that much) to see and hear chopsticks year in and year out? Or a symphonic arrangement of chopsticks (scored by a great European producer making more money in a month than in his entire previous career) in a spectacular production number that involves hundreds of identical pianos?

Is it because, for all our compulsory education, we're numbed to any-

thing more challenging? Or do we keep coming back week after week simply for want of something better to do? Is it that Hollywood can't play anything that requires more than two fingers and a kindergarten rhythm? How is that possible when Hollywood has gathered to her sun tanned bosom more geniuses, assistant geniuses, and apprentice geniuses than were assembled in Athens in the Golden Days some of the most renowned writers of today, Huxley, Faulkner, Odets, top European directors, Rene Clair, Hitchcock, Renoir, Lang, such cameramen as Gregg Toland, Joe August, and Rudy Mate, who deserve the name of artist, world famous actors like the Barrymores, Olivier, and Barry Fitzgerald

Yet, despite this impressive catalogue of talents, more creative ideas are thrown away in the incessant shoptalk of a good Hollywood party than are seen in a year of movies. There are a few honest to-God geniuses in Hollywood, several more whose lack of honesty corrodes their genius, and several hundred clearly gifted. But, with notable exceptions, these talents inevitably drain off into the same old ruts.

What's the trouble? Is it just that Hollywood is a low pressure area in our national culture? It's not quite so simple as the easy conclusion that Hollywood's hierarchy is composed of a breed inferior to the general public. Instead, too often their shortcomings lie in their reluctance to lift themselves above the lowest common denominator of public taste. How to raise the standards of all our mass consumption arts is the basic problem, Hollywood is merely an outstanding and spectacular example. The aesthetic bankruptcy that drops *Stage-Door Canteen* onto the All-Time List of Box-Office Champions (while films of less obvious attraction like *The Informer* and *The Ox Bow Incident* are lucky if they get their costs back), that permits tens of millions to enjoy movies that are false, shallow, and cliché-cluttered, is the same Idiot Muse that enables countless radio listeners to submit uncomplainingly to the brain crushing banalities of the soap operas and the routine terrors. Sex, not as defined by Hemingway but as dished up by Kathleen Winsor. Crime, not as penetrated by Dostoevski but as batted out by Erle Stanley Gardner. Love, not as dignified by Tolstoy, but as standardized, streamlined, and sweetened to taste (everybody's) in our radio dramas, love magazines, and movies. Is this the price we have to pay for being not the best-educated people in the world but merely the most literate, with more leisure than we know what to do with and so much money for recreation that the recreative pursuits must be geared to mass production?

## 2

From the nickelodeon days of forty years ago, American films seem to have suffered from a surfeit of public approval. Whereas the

French, with their artistic traditions, approached films with serious purpose, the chief motivation in America was profit; the emphasis in the formative years was speed in production and quick turnover. Since the American people apparently possessed a bottomless and indiscriminate capacity for pie-in-the-face comedies, action pictures, naïve pornography, and melodrama, these are what they got.

As early as 1905, Edwin S. Porter was caught in a dilemma that has been trapping well-intentioned but something less than steel-willed film makers ever since. Developing in the muckraking period that produced Lincoln Steffens, Jack London, Frank Norris, Upton Sinclair, Theodore Dreiser, and other social critics, Porter began to explore not only the photographic possibilities of the new medium but its effectiveness as social commentary as well. One Porter film distinctive in a day of prat-falls and clumsy chases was *The Kleptomaniac*, which contrasts a wealthy shop-lifter, whose suave lawyer saves her from judicial wrath, with a poor woman driven to stealing bread for her children, who receives a harsh sentence. Another Porter film attempted to deal with the problem of a released criminal whose prison record blocks his efforts at rehabilitation, a theme explored with considerable success in Wanger and Lang's *You Only Live Once* some thirty years later.

Crude as those pioneer films were in both content and technique, they were hailed as artistically revolutionary by early film critics. But meanwhile Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* had become the first "super-colossal hit." The public wanted more Great Train Robberies. So did nickelodeon owners. The Edison Company was in business to see that they got them. Porter cranked out a picture a week to keep up with the demand. He gave them train robberies, bank robberies, and mail robberies; there was no time and no financial incentive to continue to develop the techniques with which he had led the field in 1903. Soon the critics were saying that one Porter movie was like another. But the public was back in growing numbers every week.

Looking across the span between *The Great Train Robbery* and *Brute Force* (or a dozen other recent entries that do not spare the rod) it would seem that America's favorite film actors have been shooting it out in earnest for forty three years. The popular enthusiasm for vicarious mayhem and glorified criminality made Porter a rich man but choked off his talent. It may be the ghost of Edwin S. Porter that haunts so many directors today—men like King Vidor, who came to the film center twenty-five years ago with a fresh point of view, artistic independence, and the ambition to do the first honest films of American life. *The Crowd*, *Hallelujah*, and *Our Daily Bread* were courageous attempts to live up to this purpose.

But the big studios, frowning on experimentation, wanted him to revert to such second rate perfection as *The Big Parade* and *The Champ*. The sales departments, geared to standard merchandise, balked at what they sneeringly called 'arty stuff.' And the public wasn't there.

Vidor, like Porter, gradually succumbed to the machine. Now and then a film like *The Citadel* reminded his fans of his essential qualities. But his artistic identity, the association of his name with those individualized films which most deeply expressed him—this has come to be sacrificed on the altar of a bloodthirsty and uncompromising god called Box Office.

Since the days of Porter and his one reel thrillers, movie attendance has increased 1000 per cent, until today the gluttonous, overstimulated appetite of the movie fans consumes well over 400 pictures a year in 16,500 theaters (one seat for every 12½ persons of our total population). It is to Hollywood's credit that it possesses sufficient creativity to produce perhaps half a dozen excellent films a year, and a dozen more that aim at excellence. But to service those thousands of movie houses with a change of program at least once a week, Hollywood must feed into the nation's projection machines some 40,000 miles of film a week, while grinding out 600 miles of 'original' entertainment films a year. That's a lot of mileage, especially when three out of four pictures are probably re-treads and beginning to wear alarmingly thin.

To service 100 million American habitues of double features (plus another 30 million in England, and millions more throughout the world), films have had to be produced in large factories with tremendous overheads. In our inflationary market a film that costs less than a million dollars is tagged as a 'B' and a two-hour feature that draws on the best talents in all departments can hardly be brought in, as they say, for less than three million. With major studios producing from thirty-five to fifty features a year, film making has become big business. But despite profits that have been mounting steadily for fifty years (depression troughs excepted), *Fortune's* survey of the film industry charges it with not enjoying the profits it should, considering the world-wide popularity of its product. Automobiles, it would seem, are a less spectacular but more dependable investment. So is Coca-Cola. These businesses are efficient because they have standardized their production and minimized their risks. That is good NAM talk. Now, when a single picture can gross over thirty million dollars, when total film grosses reach a billion and a half dollars a year when the Rockefeller and Morgan interests, through their Chase National Banks, RCA's, Western Electrics and A.T.&T.'s control the major film factories, which in turn control the distribution systems and exhibition outlets, you are going to get minimization of risk and standardization of production.

One of the surest minimizer standardizers over the years has been the star. Until 1910 the original movie companies which formed the first monopoly (as members of the Motion Picture Patents Company) purposely kept their featured players anonymous in the shortsighted belief that publicizing their names would encourage them to hold out for higher salaries and so increase production costs. But the nickelodeon fans were already beginning to show spontaneous signs of that fawning adoration, worshipful submission, and vicarious passion that has become one of the more significant phenomena of our high-blood-pressure culture. Forty years ago letters were pouring in requesting the name of "The Biograph Girl," or "The Man with the Sad Eyes," "The Handsome Indian," or "Little Mary." Thus the craze began. It spread, as one pioneer producer has so poetically expressed it, like wild flowers. The status-quo mentalities of the early monopolists resisted it, and perished. The enterprising independents—Zukor, Lasky, Goldwyn, Laemmle—recognized it, encouraged it, institutionalized it, and thrived.

Star worship is a sociological, psychological, pathological, and 64-million dollar question (the net profit for last year). Since we shall probably be buried with our stars, it can even become an archaeological question. A star isn't made by critical acclaim. It is something much more basic, more frightening—essential to a people sapped by frustration. Mary Pickford's salary didn't jump from \$50 to \$10,000 a week before World War I because she was a fine actress (although she was one of the first to demonstrate what film acting was) but because she was America's Sweetheart. This was no mere publicity slogan. She literally was. And women didn't tear the clothes off Valentino because they were so impressed with the histrionic talent he revealed in *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. A provocative study of American morality could be based on our changing taste in female stars: the fluttery Victorian heroines—Gish—before World War I, the wicked (still in a Victorian sense) Theda Bara of the war years, our Dancing Daughters of the twenties—Colleen Moore, Clara Bow, Phyllis Haver, our new found sophisticates—Gloria Swanson and Pola Negri, the Sex-without-qualms group—Mae West, Jean Harlow, Marlene Dietrich, Hedy Lamarr, and lately the romanticized normalcy of Greer Garson and Ingrid Bergman with some leg art (Grable) thrown in for the boys.

Today, if a star can act—or create a living character on the screen—it is only an incidental embellishment of his stature as a member of our contemporary mythology. More often, men and women who came to the screen as actors have had to suspend or freeze their gifts in order to fit into the fixed roles they are playing in the minds, hearts, or emotionally



immature libidos of the movie fans (short for *fanatics*) Jimmy Cagney, for instance, was an actor before he became the God of Hardboiled Goodness, Soft-boiled Badness, and Small-Fry Sex Appeal Long before Spencer Tracy was deified, he went to the chair in *The Last Mile*, and went effectively But he is a grown-up Eagle Scout now, the Bumbling, Practical, Hard-headed but Soft-hearted AMERICAN Why let him play any other part, the producer argues with terrifying logic, when we already have box-office proof that this is the part the public wants him to play?

Just as Gable, whether he speaks the language of Rhett Butler or of a colloquial account-executive in radio, can only be Gable the Traveling Salesman, the wickedly handsome fellow it's fun to dally with but dangerous to marry, for whom every woman from Park Avenue to RFD 1 secretly longs That Flynn? Another Traveling Salesman Van Johnson? The King of the Cute Dates Lana Turner may be cast as the murderously lustful wife of a hamburger-stand owner in *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, but what she really represents is a glamorously groomed mannikin, not a tramp alive with disruptive passion as James M. Cain had written her, but a professional model in a white turban and tailored shorts, Miss Hamburger Stand of 1946, made up for her peacock walk down the reviewing ramp

Perhaps this is what the loyal young men and women of the Lana Turner Fan Clubs of America, Inc., insist she should be For regardless of any individuality she once possessed, she has been grooved and shellacked into a standard brand It is the box office magnetism of these standard brands that insure a film against the hazards of fortune that haunt all creative effort Not the play but the star is the thing More than any other single factor, the star has kept the business of motion pictures on its feet and the art of motion pictures on its back

#### 4

A star like Chaplin, of course, can create an unforgettably valid, three-dimensional personality that seems to have a life of its own like the enduring characters of literature And there have been fine pictures in which the stars were subordinated to the theme and general conception—Gary Cooper and James Stewart in memorable Capra films, Spencer Tracy and Sylvia Sydney in *Fury*, Merle Oberon, Laurence Olivier, and David Niven in *Wuthering Heights* Ray Milland in his Academy Award interpretation of Don Birnham in *The Lost Weekend* But these are only some of the exceptions that prove how much more often this rule could be broken if there were more individual courage and artistic conviction among the film makers and a more mature response

from a glamour-happy public Too often, under the star system, great stories have been reduced to vehicles, character development has been sacrificed to the exploitation of surface personality, and Don Ameche has portrayed Alexander Graham Bell

Even in the age of the star system, some of our more enduring pictures have been those with non-star (euphemistically called *all-star*) casts John Ford and Dudley Nichols's *Stagecoach*, *The Informer*, and *The Long Voyage Home*, Milestone's *Of Mice and Men* and *A Walk in the Sun*, Cowan and Wellman's *G I Joe*, and most recently *Crossfire*, a precedent-shattering attack on race hatred that adds RKO studio head Dore Schary, producer Adreon Scott, director Edward Dmytryk, and writer John Paxton to the honor roll of Hollywood innovators

If we can learn to forsake narcissistic images and hand-me-down reveries for real actors interpreting believable characters in honest situations, if we can begin to demand more of Hollywood than the gilded, faded lilies to which most of us have become accustomed, our screen may begin to prove consistently what it now indicates only spasmodically that it is not only the most entertaining but the most satisfying and compelling of all the art-forms, synthesizing, as it does, composition, pantomime, spoken drama, photography, rhythmic motion, and music

When the Grable and Van Johnson Clubs have given way to the Ford and Wyler Clubs, the Nichols and the Sherwood Clubs, or the Society for the Appreciation of the Photography of James Wong Howe—sensuously, if just one of our puerile fan clubs were to be transformed into a society for the understanding and encouragement of better films, like those that have sprung up in England and France, it would be a sign that we are beginning to give this abused medium the adult attention it deserves

Meanwhile, it is still sound business to put those standard brand stars in standard brand stories, stories which have stood the test of ordeal-by-box-office There is an anecdote going the rounds about the head of a large studio—let's call him A.C—who ran a Marine picture for a fellow production head The competitor liked the picture and asked A.C. what else he was working on "A submarine picture," A.C. said "Got a good story?" the competitor asked "Sure—you just saw it," A.C. said Whether or not this anecdote is apocryphal, no one could doubt that any similarity between the Marine picture and the submarine picture, when they later appeared, was purely intentional

## 5

Ever since *The Great Train Robbery*, the "cycle" has been a favorite crutch of the rabbit hearted and the bookkeeper-brained who

would rather beat out a measly bunt than run the risk of striking out to knock one over the fence. We have had Western outlaw cycles, rural romance cycles, *femme fatale* cycles, ancient spectacle cycles, Civil War cycles, flapper cycles, gangster cycles, wicked heroine cycles, and most recently, a slew of alleged psychiatric stories through which amnesia has spread like a common cold. It is not improbable that some knowledge of mental illness, its complex causes and its various therapies, would be of assistance to screen writers and directors in motivating and adding new facets to their characters and plots. But like a Midas wand which turns everything it touches into a single consistency, Hollywood points its golden finger at psychiatry, and lo, the psychiatrist becomes a beautiful young damsel who falls in love at first sight with her tall, handsome patient whose one convenient dream she spells out like a Freudian crossword puzzle. Bombarded by a two year barrage of psychopathology plots, the public might be expected at least to have acquired a more enlightened attitude toward this vital new branch of medicine. But about all movie goers could have learned from the current cycle is that the murderer will most likely turn out to be the head psychiatrist.

Since the surface writing, the direction, the photography, the editing, the visual tricks, and all the other phases of this complex art have been steadily improving while content has lagged, it seems that more and more technique is lavished on less and less, until today the average Hollywood film comes off the assembly line like a well made can: canned love, canned adventure, canned psychiatry, canned history, canned spiritual values, hermetically sealed, untouched by human hand or human heart. When one film critic described *No Leave, No Love* as "a cheap picture on which no expense has been spared," he was being specific where ace screen writer Dudley Nichols generalized in accusing most Hollywood films of being "slick, smooth and bright as steel, and just as devoid of life."

In recent months there has been a growing demand from responsible film critics for more films dealing honestly with contemporary American life. From his fortified position on the *New York Times* Bosley Crowther has been blasting away at Hollywood's "fancified stereotypes" and pleading for films which come to grips with contemporary problems and contemporary ideas. From Louisville, Boyd Martin, the *Courier Journal's* drama editor, has been waging a campaign against escapist fairy tales and threadbare formulas, in favor of "genuinely dramatic problems of these critically momentous times." The public, Mr. Martin seems to think, are tired of warmed-over pipe dreams and ready for stronger stuff.

But to most Hollywood executives, the safest stories still seem to be

those which do the people's dreaming for them. Reverie by experts, a silent star once summed it up: Away from your troubles, away from your responsibilities and your punch-in-punch-out monotony, you sit there in the enveloping darkness and let DeMille or some other genius of mediocrity spin out for you a million dollar dream. The homely secretary takes off her glasses and blossoms into a beautiful woman and the ideal mate for the boss. The rich and spoiled but beautiful heiress meets her match in an even more headstrong man of the people. The efficient and successful career woman who has forgotten that she is a woman is reminded of the fact by a forceful gent who puts her back in the home, where, it turns out, she wanted to be all along. Just in the nick of time, the villain is caught, the game is won, the show goes on.

Now there is nothing wrong with a little honest reverie now and then. We all have a bit of Walter Mitty in us and go around doing heroic, romantic things on the private stages of our minds. It is only natural that the screen should reflect and embellish these reveries.

But when an individual begins to have more and more and longer and longer reveries, when he retreats from every difficult situation into the prettier world of fantasy, he is on his way toward becoming a schizoid personality who can no longer distinguish his fantasies from his real existence. Social psychologists may speculate about whether as a people we aren't running this same danger of turning away from our problems and escaping for longer periods than is healthy into our celluloid reveries. No other medium has had the power both to lift people completely out of themselves into a billowy world of romance, and to show things completely as they are—to look into your home or the home of your neighbor or of some distant community (it could be no further than Harlem from Radio City) you would never have the chance to see. Only the motion picture camera can look so closely into the face of a man that it can even record the unsaid things that come into his eyes—and then swing away, over the buildings, over the city, to place him in long-shot perspective as just one more of the city's millions. Movies can be used either as an ether cone to wipe out our consciousness and drug us into stupid oblivion, or as adrenalin, shot into our failing hearts to stimulate us to new vitality, broaden our knowledge, deepen our understanding.

## 6

A good businessman, we have noted, aims to please as many people as possible while minimizing risk and standardizing production. The aim of the good artist, on the other hand, is exactly the opposite. He turns his back on every formula, keeps breaking new ground, risks everything, and whether he succeeds or fails, prepares to risk again. When

the definitive history of Hollywood's first fifty years is written, or the big novel that catches the whole spirit of the place, it will concern itself with this still unresolved struggle between the business machine and those men and women of talent who failed to check their personal integrity and artistic conscience at the gate when they came in

From this tug of war have issued some of Hollywood's best films Ford and Nichols's plans for *The Informer* went begging until finally, with a conviction all too rare among film professionals, they offered to do their picture for nothing and gamble on the returns *The Lost Weekend* might never have seen the light of a projection machine if writer Charles Brackett and director Billy Wilder, Paramount's Gold Dust Twins, hadn't insisted on adapting the Jackson novel as their price for doing a musical more to the taste of 'the front office' This take-one-to-do one theory has been a long time formula of Hollywood compromise John Ford not only wins three Academy Awards, he also stoops to *Wee Willie Winkie*, *Steamboat Round the Bend*, and *Submarine Patrol*

Conversely, *Fortune* may say of Darryl Zanuck, in approving his right to head a major studio, 'His taste, his desire, his convictions are average—as they should be' Yet Zanuck, the Super-Average Man, in his topical, hard hitting early days at Warner Brothers, came up with *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, *The Public Enemy*, and *They Won't Forget* He gambled on *The Grapes of Wrath* He dared to make *Wilson*, a well intentioned film without stars He bought *Anna and the King of Siam* and resisted what must have been for him an excruciating temptation to fill it full of formula love Recently, Zanuck instructed his Eastern story department to corral the best new novels, regardless of whether or not they measured down to familiar movie plots Thus Zanuck, the Common Denominator, eventually comes into conflict with the Zanuck who dares reverse his own well trodden field and challenge spreading bigotry with *Gentleman's Agreement*

Samuel Goldwyn—hardy perennial among independent producers—recently accused Hollywood of having run dry of ideas There were not nearly enough good stories and good writers, he charged, to supply those four to five hundred pictures a year The enthusiasm, if not desperation, with which film studios pounce on almost every new play or novel which does not deal with incest or perversion indicates Hollywood's failure as an indigenous creative source Producers blame writers for this, writers tell you the fault lies with producers Actually this buck passing on both sides is camouflage for moral cowardice Producers who will pay a quarter of a million dollars for a daring Broadway hit will not pay a quarter of a dollar for the same story presented in film-outline form There is almost no price they will not pay for a New York success, since

this protects them against the risk of backing their own judgments. As a result, there has been little incentive for writing off-the-beaten path material directly for motion pictures. Instead, the so-called "original stories" fed into the studio thrashing machines almost inevitably deal with worn out types in worn-out situations, old shoes polished to a bright, deceptive shine in the accepted trickery of all second-hand merchants.

Some of our most promising writers have submitted to this golden degradation. With their novels or their poems or their plays behind them, they immerse themselves in Hollywood's seductive comforts. Able and industrious as many of them are, they have cut themselves off from the experiences, the roots, the vital stimulants that invariably generated the works which won them their original reputations. Commuting between the Tennis Club and a major studio writers' building, without sufficient curiosity even to explore the sprawling, transplanted Middle Western city that spreads around them, an alarming percentage of Hollywood's more successful scenarists write in a contracting circle of empty facility.

## 7

But as the American film industry heads into the Late Forties and Frightening Fifties, there are at least ten conditions for change (if not improvement) creating a more dynamic atmosphere than at any other time since the Years of the Independent Rebellion, 1910-1916 (starring Goldwyn, Lasky, Zukor, Laemmle, and others).

*Condition One* The gradual elimination of block booking, whereby major studios are able to foist on the public dozens of careless and inferior films which exhibitors are forced to rent in order to get the superior films they want.

*Condition Two* The possible disappearance of the double feature, a hangover from the depression doldrums when free dishes, money, cars, and added attractions were part of the desperate effort to lure movie patrons back into the theaters.

*Condition Three* Inflationary prices and the resulting drop in purchasing power, making an anachronism of the wartime definition of a smart showman—one who throws open his doors and jumps out of the way to avoid being trampled in the rush. Movie-goers are beginning to pick and choose. Whether they will continue to choose *Coney Island* in preference to *The Ox-Bow Incident* across the street is another question.

*Condition Four* Sharply rising costs of film production. There is a growing conviction on the part of Hollywood executives that "A" pictures are going to require new quality in order to do better than break even.

*Condition Five* Growth of independent production. Last year nearly half of Hollywood's total output was made independently, which means

outside of the production controls, though not necessarily outside of the financial controls, of the major studios. Whether the directors, writers, and stars set up their own corporations for income tax or loftier motives, the odds for better pictures are all on the side of those which bear an individual stamp and are made with individual care. The rash of independents, while not necessarily providing better pictures, may provide a more creative atmosphere in which to attempt them.

*Condition Six* Signs of flexibility on the part of some big studio bosses who are entrusting production programs to younger, more liberal producers drawn from the ranks of writers and directors, while allowing others an unprecedented amount of creative elbowroom within the major company frameworks. Among the more intelligent innovations is Schary's plan to devote RKO's low budget pictures to artistically advanced experimentation that may eventually eliminate the pulp level "B" pictures.

*Condition Seven* The influence of war experiences on Hollywood's film men. Many directors and writers who did documentary film work for the armed services have returned to Hollywood with a broadened conception of what a motion picture can be. The documentary technique reflected in several recent films may in time pull down to earth Hollywood's traditional prettified naturalism. Willie Wyler's direction in *The Best Years of Our Lives* shows a regard for realistic detail and a feeling for the way Americans really behave that are not only refreshing but a significant improvement over his best (which was good enough) pre-war films.

*Condition Eight* The renaissance of European film production, including such successful importations as the Italian masterpiece *The Open City*, the French *Well Digger's Daughter*, the Russian venture into pure entertainment, *The Stone Flower*, and the consistent high quality of British productions which carried off a disproportionate majority of the votes for the Critics' Circle's Best Ten Pictures of the Year. These foreign films not only offer competitive stimulation to Hollywood creators but serious economic competition to our Big Five anxious to re-establish their domination of world markets.

*Condition Nine* An increasingly mature attitude toward their craft on the part of a growing number of film makers who, in local organs like the *Screen Writer* and the *Hollywood Quarterly*, the trade papers and in frequent group discussions, express a growing sense of responsibility toward the medium which has become, if not "the unacknowledged legislator of the world," certainly Everyman's University.

*Condition Ten* Hopeful indications of a stirring desire for something better on the part of film audiences, some of whom learned to laugh at

the dramatic inadequacies of the Special Service movies that helped to interrupt the monotony of military life. An overwhelming proportion of the "preview cards" on *Crossfire*, for instance, expressed a desire for "more films like this that give us something to think about."

In the second fifty years of American film production, our movies may drift along in the listless calm of creative cynicism and public indiscrimin-  
ation. Or they may forge ahead to a new maturity which will enable us to be not merely the most entertained people of all time, but the most capable of empathy—that ability to experience someone else's emotions which is the basis of civilized behavior and the ultimate power of the motion picture.

This is the challenge, not only for our film makers, but for all 98 million of us who line up at our favorite theater every week. Which will we choose, the stupor of anesthesia or the stimulus of adrenalin?

In the light of recent developments, the author wishes to add the following to the list of conditions which appeared in the original *Atlantic Monthly* article. The film industry, in its most fluid state since the days of its infancy, has been subjected to three severe challenges in recent months. The author believes these may be decisive in conditioning the Hollywood of the Fifties and regrets that time and space do not allow them to be more than briefly indicated here.

*One* The Supreme Court decision in favor of separating the major producing companies from their theater chains. This may result in nothing less than an economic revolution of the film industry, including elimination of block booking with its standard-lowering policy of tie in sales of hasty, inferior productions. Exhibitors must rent in order to acquire outstanding films. Separation may result in temporary dislocation, eventual raising of artistic standards.

*Two* The Thomas Committee Hearings on subversive activities in Hollywood and the subsequent firing and black-listing of ten writers and directors found in contempt of the Committee. Unfortunately this has created an atmosphere of fear in Hollywood that is hardly conducive to the production of more films of serious contemporaneity such as *Best Years*, *Crossfire*, and *Gentleman's Agreement*. The director of *Best Years* has already been quoted as saying that he would not be able to make this film under present political conditions.

*Three* Decrease of purchasing power and uncertainty about the future, which has cut film audiences almost 50 per cent since the end of 1947. The lush days of war prosperity when "every picture makes money" appear to be over. Exhibitors report that their customers no longer show up at the box office automatically every week. They are described as



"shopping for better pictures" Some critics believe the impressive box-office success of *Best Years* (No. 1 in 1947) and the growing appreciation for cinematic realism, together with the sharp decline in profits for 1948, may stimulate Hollywood to attempt films that address themselves to more mature emotions

#### POSTSCRIPT—DECEMBER 1954

Would it be too immodest of the author of this article to point his script-writing finger at *On the Waterfront* (directed by Elia Kazan), citing it as a picture that successfully met the challenges of at least four of the above conditions? Independently produced (condition 5) at relatively low cost (condition 4), this film used the documentary technique (condition 7) to portray the way some Americans "really behave" (condition 7 again). The fact that this picture gave the movie goer "something to think about" (condition 10) did not keep it from becoming perhaps the most highly praised film of 1954, as well as one of the year's biggest box-office successes. It is possible for film makers to please critics, audiences and financiers, not by trying to pander to any one of these three forces, but by obeying the ancient creative urge to please themselves

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Outline the principal steps in the development of the movies in America
- 2 What does Schulberg mean by his statement that the film makers "have proceeded to play chopsticks"?
- 3 How has the profit motive affected the type of movies offered to the public?
- 4 What has been the effect of the development of stars on the kinds of movies produced? What great artists have been able to rise above the usual limitations imposed on stars?
- 5 How have the movies contributed to unhealthy reverie or day-dreaming?
- 6 What conditions which may offer some possibilities of change in the movies does Schulberg list? What are some even more recent conditions developed since the article was written?
- 7 Many of the movies mentioned by Schulberg may not be known to you. Can you supply titles from your own experience?
- 8 Explain the outline of Schulberg's essay

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 From your experience with the movies do you think that movie makers underestimate the intelligence of the American people?
- 2 Do the movies compare favorably with radio and television in the quality of entertainment offered?

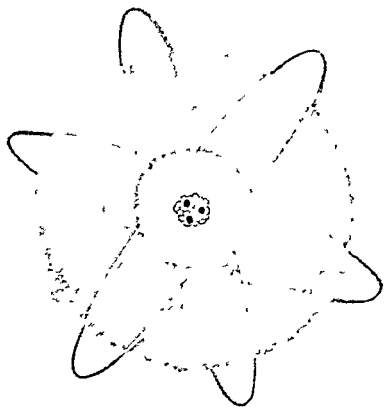
3. In mass entertainment, should artistic considerations always prevail over business considerations when they are in conflict?
4. What criteria should one use to judge the value of a movie?
5. Defend (or refute) the thesis that the movies are an entertainment medium and therefore should not attempt to stimulate thought.

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

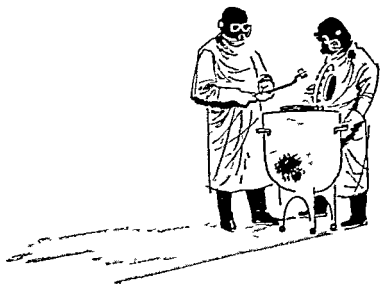
1. The best movie I ever saw
2. Business and art cannot be successfully combined.
3. Life in America as Hollywood pictures it.
4. Virtues and faults of foreign films.
5. The advantages and disadvantages of daydreaming.
6. What makes a good motion picture

## PART III: *On Science and Social Science*

### *Chapter Seven*



Science



TRUE SCIENCE TEACHES,  
ABOVE ALL, TO DOUBT AND TO BE IGNORANT

MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO

## Introduction

Science, it is generally agreed, is not mere manipulation in the laboratory, much more essentially it is a way of thinking. Scientists themselves tend to feel that the only proper way to learn the basic method and philosophy of science is to become a student of a specific science. But non scientists need to understand the method of science, too. In fact, workers in specific sciences themselves may lack a clear understanding of the basic principles of scientific thought. This is true because a student may learn to dissect animals, manage chemical reactions, or classify the behavior of rats in mazes, without understanding the method of science as a distinctive way of thinking.

Yet science has an extraordinary effect on our lives, and layman and scientist alike need to know the nature of the scientific method. If they do not, things can go wrong. This danger arises from ignorance: the person who doesn't understand the nature of science tends to look on it as magic—fearful, wonderful, and incomprehensible. When he does so, he gives up the hope of really intelligent use and control of the products of science. Disastrous results, like the improper use of atomic energy, become a possibility. It is thought by many atomic scientists, for instance, that they should have much more to say about the use of atomic energy because they better understand not only its nature and potentialities but also what is possible and what is not possible with regard to its worldwide control.

There are still broader considerations. Modern thought is on the whole committed to the scientific method and attitude. If continued improvement and progress are to come, it is probable that they will come largely through intelligent use of the scientific method—through knowledge of the power of the scientific method, and also through knowledge of its limitations.

The articles chosen for this chapter all bear on the problems just mentioned.

Herbert J. Muller, author of 'What Science Is,' teaches English literature at Purdue University, and has published several books, including *Thomas Wolfe, The Uses of the Past* and *Science and Criticism*. The article printed here is from the last named book. It makes a

general definition of science in terms of the subjects science embraces and the method of reasoning it follows

John R. Baker, a professor of zoology at Oxford University, wrote *Science and the Planned State*, from which the article "The Values of Science" comes, as his answer to those who were asserting that science exists merely to serve material wants. He shows how totalitarian ideologies go wrong in making this assumption, explains the positive higher values of science, and incidentally tells something of the interesting beginnings of modern science in earlier centuries.

Anthony Standen, a scientist with interests in entomology and chemistry, wittily points out some logical loopholes in scientific reasoning, and cautions against blind acceptance of all scientific conclusions in his article "Science Can Be Silly." Far from being anti-scientific in spirit, he is quite scientific, because in common with the best scientific thought his article represents a stubborn effort to think clearly. It suggests also that few scientific conclusions are perfect—that we can expect them to be replaced by ever better ones.

Richard L. Meier's "The Origin of the Scientific Species" is one scientist's attempt to classify his fellow-scientists by family background, political orientation, cultural tastes, and ethical attitude. It may stimulate you to think of what sort of science, if any, you would wish to enter as a career. The writer is now a chemist connected with the Program of Education and Research in Planning at the University of Chicago. Formerly he was Executive Secretary of the Federation of American Scientists, and in that capacity gathered most of the data for his article.

## HERBERT J. MULLER

born 1905 educated at Cornell, is now Professor of English at Purdue. He has specialized in modern fiction and the philosophy of history. The following selection is from his *Science and Criticism*. He has also written *Thomas Wolfe and The Uses of the Past* [From *Science and Criticism* by Herbert J. Muller, Copyright, 1943 by Yale University Press]

### *What Science Is*

Roughly stated, the scientific method is to go and look, and then look again. The most elaborate experiments and abstruse equations are designed to answer the simple question, "What are the facts?" Today this question seems so natural and obviously sensible that it is hard to understand how for centuries men could repeat Pliny's statement, that the blood of a goat would shatter a diamond, when a simple test would have disproved it. Yet it seems that they did not perform the test, and the explanation is that the basis of their thought was not empirical but "rational." Although Aristotle went to nature, he returned for authority to pure reason. He simply asserted that heavy bodies must fall faster than light ones, just as he asserted that planets move in circles because the circle is the only perfect figure. Hence Galileo's Pisa experiment marked a real revolution in thought. It marked, Dewey summarizes

*a change from the qualitative to the quantitative or metric, from the heterogeneous to the homogeneous, from intrinsic form to relations, from esthetic harmonies to mathematical formulae, from contemplative enjoyment to active manipulation and control, from rest to change, from eternal objects to temporal sequence*

In this summary, science already begins to look strange to the plain man, and of course it is strange. Even as roughly stated, its method is still not generally applied to moral, political, or other problems. For science is not, strictly, "organized common sense." Common sense is not only much vaguer and more cocksure but in a way, curiously, more practical. It deals with the total concrete situation, takes life as it comes. Science always abstracts for a very limited purpose, makes up fictions. Especially in late years, it has left common sense far behind. When scientists try to speak the plain man's language, they tell him that the quantum theory may be understood by the analogy of a clock whose mechanism had vanished, leaving only the ticks, and that if he still doesn't understand, the point is

that the universe is "not only queerer than we suppose, but queerer than we can suppose"

Yet science does remain simply a form of organized intelligence, to become oriented to it, we again do well to begin with the obvious. Although men talk as if the object of intelligence were the discovery and contemplation of eternal truths, actually they employ it chiefly to handle the new situations that are always arising even in a routine life. In daily experience they are continually experimenting, reconstructing, adjusting themselves to a continually changing environment, otherwise there could be no consciousness, no real experience at all. The scientific method is a systematic extension of this behavior. George H. Mead therefore described it as "only the evolutionary process grown self-conscious." Biologically, it is an advance in the natural direction—more differentiation, finer adaptation to environment, greater control over environment.

Similarly the basic interests of science, the concern with the "material" world, are not actually newfangled or alien. Men often feel that nature is hostile to them, at best very careless, at worst unfathomably cruel, in their philosophies they have represented it as a show of illusory or accidental appearances, in their religions as a mess of devil's pottage. Nevertheless they also feel a deep and constant kinship. They naturally personify the world about them and draw from it their metaphors for human life—they bud and bloom in youth, they ripen like fruit on the bough, they fall into the sere, the yellow leaf. The rhythms of nature are in their blood. Like poetry, science explores and articulates these relations, it realizes our rich heritage as children of this earth. Like Christian theology, moreover, it assumes that the heritage is lawful. Science grew out of the medieval faith that the world is orderly and rational, and that all happenings in it could be explained. Scientists now consider this a postulate, not a fact, and their explanations are usually offensive to orthodox theologians, nevertheless they have the same working faith as the theologians. Thus Newton could lay the foundations of the mechanistic universe in a spirit of extreme piety, and be applauded by other devout Christians, he was simply clarifying the ways of God to man. Thus agnostic scientists still admire all the evidence of uniformity, regularity, harmony in the universe. They admire the most wonderful of miracles, that there are not incessant miracles.

In other words, they are not really so inhuman as they are reputed to be. Whereas the man on the street sees only the gadgetry of science, intellectuals are prone to the other extreme of viewing it always in the abstract. They dwell upon its remorseless impersonality, the coldness of its truth, they forget its personal satisfactions, the imaginative value of its truths. For to scientists truth is indeed beauty. Mathematicians exclaim



over the "elegance" of their demonstrations, Einstein delights in the "pre-established harmonies" that physicists discover, J W N Sullivan is struck by the "astonishing beauty and symmetry" that Minkowski gave the theory of relativity by adding the notion of a four dimensional continuum. On the other hand, they are displeased by unsightly gaps or bulges in their theory-patterns, dislike the messiness of quantum physics even when its theories seem to fit the facts. Their effort is always to get all their facts to fall into a shape, and their preference among theories, when the experimental test has yet to decide, appears to be determined chiefly by the esthetic quality of the shape. Thus Sullivan notes the comments of Einstein and Eddington on each other's attempt to reduce the laws of electromagnetism to geometry. Einstein said he simply did not "like" Eddington's theory, though he could not disprove it, and Eddington said Einstein's theory was a matter of "taste." Altogether, the generic motive of science is no doubt utilitarian—"service to mankind," if one likes more exalted terms, but the individual scientist, like the individual artist, does his work for the simple, unexalted reason that he likes it, and when it turns out right he feels a comparable lift and glow.

Science does "free the spirit." Like thought itself, science has become a passion and a luxury. It follows the gleam, it stirs hopes too wildly dear. It is indeed often not utilitarian enough: science for science's sake is as much a cult as art for art's sake, and can carry one as far from the actualities of purposeful living. Yet science does produce saints. Not to go down the long list of heroes and martyrs, Mme. Curie will do as an example of simple, noble goodness. Such idealism is not itself scientific, to be sure, and may be called religious. Nevertheless the fact remains that science can inspire it without benefit of clergy.

This demonstration that even the scientist is human may seem inconsequential. It finally leads, however, to the heart of the problem of what science is. The recent developments in its philosophy may be summed up in precisely this recognition of the "human element," the human "stand-point" that is literally involved in all statements. Scientific laws are not chips off the old block Reality, as interpretations of sense impressions, they take after the human mind as well. All knowledge is a joint enterprise, an affair whose conditions are both inside and outside the organism. It is the offspring of the marriage of man and nature, a union in which the older partner may be expected to outlive the younger but which is indissoluble during the life of man.

This idea will concern us later on. Immediately, Einstein tells us how to understand the scientist's method: "Don't listen to his words, examine his achievements." Still better, watch him at work, examine the actual operations by which he gets his knowledge, and here an excellent guide is

William H. George's *The Scientist in Action* Whatever it may become in theory, George points out, a scientific fact is in practice an observation of coincidences. Although products of sensory impression, facts are impersonal in that they are independent of the judgment of any one man; they are statements of coincidences that can be observed under the same conditions by all men. The scientist can therefore gather and test them without bothering about such philosophical problems as whether there really is an external world, "real" is not an observable property. He does have to bother, however, with the problem of classifying and interpreting his facts, fitting them into patterns called theories and laws. The more comprehensive these are, the better he is pleased, but the most comprehensive is still tentative and does not "reduce by one the number of absolute truths to be discovered." Newton's great laws were patterns into which hitherto unconnected facts could be fitted, Einstein devised a different pattern that could accommodate all these and other facts, and we may expect that more inclusive but still different patterns will be devised by Zweistein, Dreistein, etc.

In other words, facts and figures do *not* speak for themselves. For all their stubbornness, they are accommodating enough to allow a number of different interpretations—and there are always enough of them around to support almost any theory. Moreover, the facts are not simply there, waiting in line to be discovered. The scientist selects from a host of possibilities; he looks *for* as well as *at*; he may accordingly *overlook*—as Grimaldi's experiments on the path of light were long neglected because they did not fit in with Newton's corpuscular theory. Hence the advance of science has not been automatic or really systematic, and it has not been in a straight line. Science is first of all the creation of scientists, who are also men with temperaments, special interests, predispositions. (Bertrand Russell has noted, for example, the divergent developments in animal psychology under Thorndike and Koehler. "Animals studied by Americans rush about frantically, with an incredible display of hustle and pep, and at last achieve the desired result by chance. Animals observed by Germans sit still and think, and at last evolve the solution out of their inner consciousness.") More significantly, science is the creation of a definite type of mentality, which has been interested in certain kinds of phenomena but notoriously indifferent to others, averse to the seeming "wild data." Most significantly, it is the creation of a culture, a society with special interests. Even physics, which seems wholly impersonal and autonomous, has been influenced by vested social interests. The concept of energy was developed to meet the manufacturers' need of a bookkeeping device, a way of measuring the efficiency of machines in units of work; in general there is an obvious correspondence between the long reign of

classical mechanics and the needs of industry. Today, when science has developed a highly specialized technique, language, and subject matter of its own, it is still dependent upon the greater society for its privileges. It is the more profoundly a fashion of the times.

This view is not designed to humble or discredit the scientist. Rather it relieves him of the awful responsibility of speaking absolute truth. It stresses his continuity with the organic processes of evolution, the tremendous adventure of civilization, the vital needs and purposes of society, the scientist no more than the poet can afford the illusion that his activity is pure or priestly. It makes clearer the cultural pattern of science today—the concept itself of patterns, fields, organic wholes, which—as we shall see—has become important in all the sciences, and which parallels the collectivistic trend in the world of affairs. And it enables a more realistic approach, specifically, to the difficult issue of just where science properly begins and ends.

The popular notion is that science necessarily involves the use of instruments in a laboratory. Knowledge cannot be really scientific unless men have got it out of a test tube, taken an X-ray picture of it, or tried it out on some guinea pigs. Such methods are very well for dealings with sticks and stones, animal life, or the human body, but it follows that they cannot apply to the motions of mind or spirit. Laboratory workers themselves are often contemptuous of the social sciences, and of psychology when it leaves the laboratory and deals with such immeasurables as 'consciousness' and 'insight'. They distrust any statement that cannot be put into an equation. And so the critic is warned off the sciences of man, which are naturally closest to his interests. He is left with the problem of determining just where, then, the sciences stop and the humanities begin, and just what use he can make of the power that has in any event so thoroughly made over the world in which the humanities have their being.

To begin with, there are important distinctions that should remain distinct. Some generous philosophers identify science with all disciplined thought, uniting all the humanities and the sciences in one big happy family. Thus Cassius J. Keyser defines science as any work that aims to establish by legitimate means a body of categorical propositions about the actual world, he therefore accepts as science the work of Plato and Aristotle—and blurs the fundamental difference between their thought and the thought of Galileo or Darwin. Moreover, there are important differences between the sciences. The physicist and the chemist have the adventitious advantage of large subsidies (capitalism has been a generous if not a disinterested patron) and now of relative freedom from personal prejudice or official interference, the psychologist and the sociologist are

at any moment likely to tread on the corns of public opinion or get mixed up in some live social issue. But the former also have the intrinsic advantage of a subject matter that lends itself to the extremely helpful devices of mathematical measurement and controlled experiment. The experimental test is especially important, as the ultimate criterion for distinguishing scientific knowledge from philosophic speculation.

Nevertheless most distinguished scientists appear to agree with Max Planck, that from physics to sociology there is a continuous chain, and I can see no practical or logical reason for choosing to break the chain. On practical grounds, it would seem desirable to give science as much scope as possible, and not to discourage important social inquiries by verbal quibbles or qualms about their scientific chastity; it would seem foolish to demand complete, positive knowledge or none. On logical grounds, any sharp break in the chain is not only arbitrary but inconsistent with the basic scientific assumption of natural continuity. That the physical sciences are more objective and more exact than the sciences of man makes them neither more fundamental nor fundamentally different. The differences are in degree, not in kind.

Ultimately the unity of science lies in the logic, not the materials or the specific techniques of its inquiry. As formulated by Dewey in his monumental work, this is a logic of discovery and invention. Its forms are not a priori but postulational and operational; they are not absolute modes of pure reason but generalizations drawn from previous inquiry and liable to modification by subsequent discoveries. Indeed, scientists object to any theory, such as vitalism in biology, which is complete and therefore offers no possibility of advance; their curious objection, J. H. Woodger observes, is that it is *too* successful, *too* perfect. They demand that all theories live dangerously. But this experimental logic does not absolutely require the specific technique of laboratory experiment. It requires primarily that theories be so formulated as to leave room for future discoveries and almost certain modifications. It thereby exposes, indeed, the essential weakness of the sciences of man today, which is not so much the jungle growth of theory as the attitude toward this theory. As scientists, psychologists and sociologists are still very young and like youngsters much too cocky—few physicists speak with quite the assurance of John B. Watson or Pareto. More specifically, they are seldom content with mere postulates and approximates; they set up some explanatory principle as necessary and sufficient, the one positive truth by which all the other little truths must be sired or certified. Yet their attitude is quite gratuitous. This very criticism of it implies that an experimental logic can be applied to these problems too.

Wherever there is the slightest possibility of the human mind to

*know,"* wrote Karl Pearson, "there is a legitimate problem of science." If men have "known" all sorts of absurdities, there can be no question about a fact, strictly defined, and such facts are available in all spheres of interest. Observation, not measurement of coincidences, is their criterion. If it is clearly more difficult to classify and interpret them in the sciences of man, it is not clearly impossible, important relations have already been established and systematically formulated. Students of the humanities who deny that there are fundamental laws in their province necessarily think in a way that presupposes such laws—else their thought would be pointless. In sum, only by divorcing human affairs from natural processes can they be shut off from scientific inquiry, and this ancient expedient disposes of the problem by creating two more.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 In general, what is the aim of science?
- 2 What is the relation of science to so called "organized common sense"?
- 3 In what sense do science and religion have the same goal?
- 4 Describe the characteristics of scientists which show them to be very human.
- 5 Of what advantage to science is the obvious humanity of scientists?
- 6 Explain the part played in the structure of the essay by Muller's statement at the beginning of the seventh paragraph: "This demonstration that even the scientist is human" leads, however, to the heart of the problem of what science is.
- 7 What do you consider the principal emphasis of the essay—is it upon the logic of science, the humanity of scientists, the methods of science, physical science as against social science, or what?
- 8 List the three statements or ideas in the essay which most interest you. Which of them, if any, do you consider to be among the major points Muller makes?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What difficulties arise in an attempt to formulate a brief but inclusive definition of science?
- 2 Is there a difference between "facts" and "truth"? Explain.
- 3 Show the difference between the term *law* as it is used in ordinary daily life and in science.
- 4 To what extent do you think scientists have a moral responsibility for the use made of their discoveries?
- 5 Since the world is in a serious state partly because technology has advanced faster than man's ability to control the products of invention, do you think it would be wise to call a halt to scientific activity until methods of social control are established?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Science as a benefit to mankind.
- 2 Scientific method in daily life.

- 3 What a layman should know about science
- 4 Will mankind survive science?
- 5 All scientists should (or should not) be thoroughly trained in the humanities

## JOHN R BAKER

born 1900 Lecturer in Zoology and Reader in Cytology at Oxford has made several scientific expeditions to the New Hebrides He has written with J B S Haldane *Biology in Everyday Life*, and is the author of *The Scientific Life as well as Science and the Planned State*. [This selection is from *Science and the Planned State* by John R Baker, Copyright 1945 by The Macmillan Company British publishers George Allen & Unwin Ltd Reprinted by permission]

## The Values of Science

*Other interests besides the material wants of life, occupy the minds of men* —A VON HUMBOLDT

### 1 GRADES OF OPINION ON THE VALUES OF SCIENCE

That scientific knowledge can be applied to the material welfare of man is so obvious that no discussion of this value of science is necessary Those who think that science has other values do not minimize its contributions to the feeding of human beings and their protection from the elements and from ill health There are those, however, who deny that science has any value apart from these contributions to material welfare Four grades may be distinguished in the scale of opinion, as follows

- (1) Science has value only in serving the material wants of man The only consideration is the material welfare of the community as a whole This is the extreme totalitarian position
- (2) Science has value only in serving the material wants of man, but research workers do their best work if they enjoy it
- (3) Science has value both in serving the material wants of man, and also in enabling people to escape from certain mental evils The study of science prevents unhappiness consequent on pettiness of outlook, and produces forgetfulness of unpleasant memories This rather negative position is that of Bertrand Russell
- (4) Science has another value besides serving the material wants of man and enabling people to escape certain mental evils It has a

positive primary value as an end in itself, like music, art, and literature

In the past there also existed a fifth opinion, held by those who were actually glad when they thought that certain scientific discoveries could not be used to serve the material wants of man. This opinion scarcely exists to-day and seems not to merit further consideration.

## 2. SCIENTISTS DO NOT WORK ONLY FOR MATERIAL ENDS

There is not any necessary connexion between the material usefulness and *intrinsic interest* of a scientific discovery. 'We can declare without the least hesitation,' says Szent-Gyorgyi, the famous biochemist, "that to judge scientific research by its usefulness is simply to kill it. Science aims at knowledge, not utility." It is extremely unlikely that every discovery will serve man in a material way before the inevitable extinction of human life. Some of the most profound truths will probably not be used practically. Professor G. H. Hardy has made this point neatly for mathematics. He cites some easily understood mathematical proofs, whose beauty and general significance are apparent to everyone who follows them. Having won the reader's willing assent to their value, he goes on to prove that they not only are not, but cannot be used by the practical man. Euclid's proof that the number of prime numbers is infinite is so masterly and economical that everyone who follows it, mathematician or not, acclaims its value, but as Professor Hardy points out, it is more than sufficient for the engineer to know that the number of primes less than 1,000 million is 50,847,478, for practical men never work to more significant figures than this. In science we can never say that a discovery will never be used to promote material welfare, but we can and must say that scientists are interested in discoveries apart from the possibility of their producing food, shelter, health, etc.

The pretence that science only serves humanity by giving us food, health, and shelter leads to nonsense, for it means that we live only for food, health, and shelter, instead of requiring them so as to live for something else. Why do we feed and protect ourselves and others? Is it so that we and they may live to feed and protect others, so that they may do the same for yet others, and so on interminably and senselessly? 'Have we nothing eventually in view more admirable than the abolition of want and the securing of comfort for everyone, ends which at present bulk so large in our programs?' The question is put by the distinguished American physicist, Professor P. W. Bridgman. 'Will we be permanently satisfied with these, or will something more be necessary to give dignity and worth to human activity?'

There must be something else for which people want to live. Great

music, art, and imaginative literature, it may be suggested, are examples of valid ends. If a scientist makes that answer, it is necessary for him to say that he practises science so that the applications of what he discovers may keep people alive, so that they may appreciate music, art, and literature, which are the real ends in life which make him practise science. This house that Jack built rigmarole is nonsense. The scientist may indeed value these subjects highly, and they are certainly ends in themselves, but if his dominant impulse were not scientific he would be a poor scientist. Science is as much an end in itself as music or art or literature. 'if ever there are ends in themselves or goods in themselves,' Professor Bridgman has written, 'then surely the gratification of the craving for understanding is one of them.'

People engaged in practical pursuits have often advanced science, and this fact is sometimes made the basis of a claim that science had its origin in a desire to satisfy the material wants of ordinary human life. From that premiss it is argued that scientists should devote themselves to the satisfaction of those wants. Even if the claim were justified, the conclusion could not be logically deduced from it, but the claim itself is not justifiable. We cannot know anything for certain about the earliest beginnings of science, but we do know that modern savages are interested in natural objects and phenomena apart from their material usefulness. Science as we know it to-day may be said to have originated about the eighteenth century, for although there were scientific geniuses before then, the spirit of the subject was confined to a small number of people and their discoveries were somewhat isolated. During that century there was a wonderful blossoming forth of science. Magnificent work was done, especially in biology. The best of that work was inspired by nothing but an intense desire for knowledge for its own sake.

The scientist of to-day is often cynically indifferent to the early history of his subject. He knows that people used to make fantastic concoctions intended to cure human ailments, and he recognizes no connexion between such activities and his own. He is right, but he has missed the point. The men who were struggling solely to give practical help to mankind often made little or no contribution to knowledge, but those who had an intense desire for knowledge for its own sake were doing research that is comparable with the very best that is being done to-day.

Just over two centuries ago Reaumur published a memoir on the reproduction of aphids and Trembley a book on the natural history and response to experimental procedures of the little fresh water polyp *Hydra*. I challenge anyone who is cynical about old time science to point out any modern work that provides a better example of scientific method than those studies of Reaumur and Trembley. Reaumur's memoir was



devoted to the question whether aphids can reproduce without sexual union. The way in which he tackled this question, in free collaboration with Bonnet, Bazin, Trembley, and Lyonet, provides an example to be copied by modern scientists. The clear introductory statement of what was already surmised on the subject, the scrupulous care and accuracy of the work, the elaborate attention to detail, the unwillingness to accept anything without stringent proof, the avoidance of unnecessary hypotheses—all these are models for all time. Reaumur and his friends established beyond question that aphids can reproduce without sexual union. Trembley's book on *Hydra* is, of course, a classic. It contains not only an excellent description of the form and natural history of the various species, but also a full account of the studies on regeneration, which may be said to mark the origin of experimental zoology. Indeed, these experiments are quoted in modern text books, not as historical curiosities, but as our best information on the subject. Trembley's description of how he turned the minute organism inside out and how it survived this extraordinary operation was for long disbelieved, but recently Mr R. L. Roudabush has succeeded in repeating Trembley's experiment and confirmed the survival of the reversed animals. The whole of Trembley's book, like Reaumur's memoir, is a model of scientific method. In neither is there any indication that the author was striving to satisfy the material wants of man. Their spirit was that which has been the chief animating influence of science ever since.

The scientist of to-day often opens a text book and takes what he reads there as though it had arrived on those pages as a matter of course. What an eye-opener it would be if he could glimpse, even vaguely, the history of the knowledge contained in a single sentence chosen at random! Even if the sentence dealt with a modern subject, its history would go far back along the ages, and he would see a succession of the men who brought the knowledge contained in it into being. They were not just names in a history book of science: they were real live people diverse in many ways, but nearly all united in belief in the value of science as an end in itself.

### 3. THE BORDERLAND BETWEEN THE MATERIAL AND IMMATERIAL VALUES OF SCIENCE

There are certain values of science which stand half way between the crudely material values on the one hand and the immaterial values on the other. Knowledge of the facts of equal inheritance from both parents (apart from the genes borne on the sex-chromosomes) is important in framing people's general social outlook, but it does not directly provide them with food, health, or shelter. The relative status of man and woman would be different from what it is if people believed that

inheritance were wholly maternal (as the Trobriand Islanders, for instance, are said to believe) or wholly paternal (as some biologists once thought) Again, people's social outlook is affected by their beliefs on the scientific question whether what are popularly called "acquired characters" are inherited The function of science in reducing superstition comes into this category of values

#### 4. THE APPRECIATION OF SCIENCE AS AN END IN ITSELF

We must now analyse the immaterial or spiritual values of science

The history of science suggests that many great investigators have accepted the value of science as an end in itself as something so obvious as not to require analysis Einstein has well expressed what are probably the inarticulate feelings of many people who value science as an end 'The satisfaction of physical needs,' he writes, "is indeed the indispensable pre condition of a satisfactory existence, but in itself it is not enough In order to be content, men must also have the possibility of developing their intellectual and artistic powers to whatever extent accords with their personal characteristics and abilities "

There are reasons for thinking that science is potentially the greatest achievement of the human mind Optimists may look for that greatest achievement in ethical perfection They may be right and I hope they are, but life among savages has shown me that if civilization and religion have improved men morally, then the unimprovement that has occurred has been too small to give reason for much optimism about the future In most intellectual fields we cannot look forward with confidence of progress There is no reason to suppose that the historians of the future will tower above those of the present day Philosophy has given the world some of its greatest geniuses, but the history of the subject contradicts the idea of a gradual approximation towards a consensus of opinion on philosophical subjects We cannot guess the future of music, but at least it may be said that the world to-day has no composer who will bear comparison with the geniuses of the past It is sometimes argued that geniuses are not recognized in their own times, and that we may even now have a genius of musical composition in our midst, but the fallacy of this argument is apparent to anyone who is acquainted with the history of music The same considerations apply to pictorial art, and there is no sure ground for thinking that we are merely experiencing a phase of relative inactivity which will be followed by a new outburst of progress In science, on the contrary, the present state of affairs and the prospect for the future are both very good The standard of excellence is as high as ever it was We have genius to rank with the greatest of all time (in

physics alone we have Bohr, Dirac, Einstein and Schrodinger, and have only recently lost Rutherford and J J Thomson) If science be left free to expand, its expansion is inevitable, for science grows by accretion

The unimportant composer or artist does nothing permanent to make his subject greater. The unimportant scientific research worker, on the contrary, places his brick firmly in position, and on it every subsequent worker in the same field—geniuses included—will build again. The knowledge that every step forward is an advance in a gigantic undertaking is an inspiration to the scientist, for he may legitimately feel that he is playing his part in the greatest adventure of the human mind. This knowledge is one of the supreme values of science to the investigator.

It is impossible to read the biographies of the greatest scientists without realizing the high value which they have attributed to science apart from its material benefits, but they seldom analyse their appreciation very explicitly. It is unquestionable that a pleasurable excitement in approaching the unfamiliar is a part of the reason for their appreciation, an attitude of mind which is shared with the geographical explorer. A pleasure in finding order where previously disorder seemed to reign is another component of the scientific attitude. This has been stated quite unequivocally by the Danish genius of physics, Niels Bohr, who writes that the deepest foundation of science is 'the abiding impulse in every human being to seek order and harmony behind the manifold and the changing in the existing world.' T. H. Huxley wrote in his *Method and Results* that the research worker is inspired by "the supreme delight of extending the realm of law and order ever farther towards the unattainable goals of the infinitely great and the infinitely small, between which our little race of life is run." Some scientists, again, are animated by a component of that special awareness of the natural environment and feeling of community with nature and joy in natural beauty which also animate the poet and artist in their respective fields. This was clearly understood by the great German scientist, Alexander Humboldt, who wrote of "that important stage of our communion with the external world, when the enjoyment arising from a knowledge of the laws, and the mutual connexion of phenomena, associates itself with the charm of a simple contemplation of nature."

Humboldt was a person of extraordinarily wide interests. As a young man he was a successful mining technologist, but his passion for travel drew him into wider and wider fields of study until it might be said of him that if ever there was such a person as a general scientist, it was he. Few men, if any, have ever made such substantial contributions to so many diverse branches of science, and it was not only science that engaged his attention, for he was also a diplomat of high rank and a

political economist The extraordinary breadth of outlook of this great man enabled him to see science as a whole, and he expressed very vividly what he saw In a few words of the utmost simplicity he expressed a truth which our modern materialists cannot shake "other interests," he wrote, 'besides the material wants of life, occupy the minds of men' He instanced the "desire of embellishing life by augmenting the mass of ideas, and by multiplying means for their generalization" The higher enjoyments yielded by the study of nature depend upon the correctness and the depth of our views, and upon the extent of the subjects that may be comprehended in a single glance "These words are strikingly similar to those written by the philosopher, Alexander, not much less than a century later "The greatest truths are perhaps those which being simple in themselves illuminate a large and complex body of knowledge" Such truths, when grasped, unquestionably bring pleasure to the mind, and it would be fantastic to deny the existence of this kind of pleasure or to assess it lower than crude or material kinds "In considering the study of physical phenomena," said Humboldt, "we find its noblest and most important results to be a knowledge of the chain of connexion, by which all natural forces are linked together, and made mutually dependent upon each other, and it is the perception of these relations that exalts our views and ennobles our enjoyments"

The enjoyments appear subjectively to be of the same kind as those caused by the perception of artistic beauty, combined with wonder or even a pleasurable astonishment Professor J B S Haldane has stressed the value of beauty in science in a particularly concrete way "As a result of Faraday's work," he wrote, "you are able to listen to the wireless But more than that, as a result of Faraday's work scientifically educated men and women have an altogether richer view of the world for them, apparently empty space is full of the most intricate and beautiful patterns So Faraday gave the world not only fresh wealth but fresh beauty' These simple words express a profound truth, which can be denied only as a tone deaf man can deny the spiritual value of music They are a distinguished investigator's flat contradiction of the materialist concept of science Darwin expresses his feelings of beauty and wonder in the final words of *The Origin of Species* "There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one, and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved"

The finding of a kind of wonder or awe in the majesty and apparently infinite complexity of the universe has led some of the greatest scientists

of van Leeuwenhoek to realize how widespread is an interest in unfamiliar natural objects. When it was discovered by Abraham Trembley almost exactly two hundred years ago that an organism exists (we now call it *Hydra*) which feeds like an animal but buds like a plant, and reorganizes itself into two or more individuals if cut into bits with scissors, the interest aroused was such that polyps became, in the words of an anonymous eighteenth century writer, 'à la mode'. Interest in the unfamiliar is abundantly illustrated by the history of science. Even in modern times, when people tend to be less enthusiastic than they were two or three centuries ago, the discovery of a living fish belonging to a group thought to have been extinct for some sixty million years caused great excitement, and a popular weekly journal devoted a large double page entirely to the event.

Just as the unfamiliar attracts the interest of both layman and scientist, so also does the orderly. In a low form one sees the appreciation of the orderly exhibited in a collection of butterflies systematically arranged by a collector who understands little of the life processes of what he collects. No sharp line of separation can be drawn between the simple arrangement of natural objects in an orderly fashion and the systematic presentations of natural knowledge by great scientists. I found this out many years ago when demonstrating to a class of students preparing for the final Honours examination in zoology at Oxford. We were studying the anatomy of certain marine worms, and I noticed that one of the women students had a book beside her, open at a coloured plate showing the external characters of some of the animals that we were studying. The book was unfamiliar to me and I stooped down to look at it. The name gave me a surprise that I have not forgotten. I learnt a useful lesson in modesty that day, which I should be happy to share with any scientist who thinks himself a different kind of being from the layman. The student, preparing for the highest examination in zoology at a great university, was using *The Seashore shown to the Children*.

There is a widespread belief in the 'worth whileness' of finding out. The community as a whole appears to approve of the setting apart of a limited number of talented people for the express purpose of discovery, without requiring that all research should be directed towards material ends. The public expects as almost a matter of course that some one or other should concern himself with all branches of natural knowledge. This was forcibly brought home to me some years ago when I was one of the three or four people in the world who were making systematic studies of the causes of breeding seasons. When I remarked to non scientific friends that the environmental causes which regulate the breeding seasons of animals were not known—that no one knew what makes the black-

are regarded as giants' cooking vessels, the birth of twins is regarded as indicating that the agricultural crops will be prolific, etc. On the other island these and other natural phenomena are interpreted in accordance with the scientific ideas with which we are familiar. In both islands the phenomena are regarded with interest, which is equal in the two cases. Which is the better civilization (apart from future prospects)?

There may be sceptics who will deny that a balance can be held between the two islands. Others may consider that if one island's civilization is better than the other, that is solely because some external observer appreciates the one civilization more highly, for in the absence of an external observer no difference exists. Most people, however, are likely to say that the civilization in which there is true knowledge is the better. Truth, in fact, has intrinsic excellence, apart from its effects. This belief—for it seems impossible to prove or disprove in any formal way the statement that truth has or is a value—has been a mainspring of scientific research, particularly plainly exhibited in the lives of such scientific geniuses as Charles Darwin and T. H. Huxley, but animating also many much lesser men and women.

Diametrically opposite to these ideas stand those of the rulers of totalitarian states. Some general remarks on the subject are attributed to Hitler: "There is no such thing as truth. Science is a social phenomenon, and like every other social phenomenon is limited by the benefit or injury it confers on the community." Himmler has applied these principles to a particular case, when attacking German scholars who refused to acknowledge the genuineness of a forged document on German archaeology. It surprised him that anyone should make a fuss as to whether it were true. "The one and only thing that matters to us," he is reported to have said, "and the thing these people are paid for by the state, is to have ideas of history that strengthen our people in their necessary national pride." As the Nazi professor of philosophy at Heidelberg announced, "We do not know of or recognize truth for truth's sake." For Hitler and Himmler and the Nazi professor it seems nonsense to worry whether a given statement is true or not: the only thing that matters is how that statement affects the community. It is probable that few first rate scientists would assent to what they regarded as an untruth, even if they could be persuaded that such assent would be materially beneficial to the community. It is apparent that the orderly structure and dependability of science would become transformed into chaos if Hitler's and Himmler's ideas were accepted by scientists as a whole, and scientists have always been accustomed to place a very high value upon truth, generally without considering the philosophical background of the position that they adopt.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 On what grounds does Baker reason that it is nonsense to say that science only serves humanity by serving material ends?
- 2 What does he mean by saying that science, like literature, art and music, is an "end in itself"?
- 3 What kind of value does he attribute to those discoveries of science that neither serve purely material ends nor supply knowledge that is wholly an end in itself?
- 4 Which of the non material values of science do you think he regards as the highest?
- 5 What is the totalitarian argument regarding the values of science?
- 6 Explain what advantages in making his ideas clear to the reader Baker gains from listing at the beginning of his article four grades of opinion on the values of science
- 7 Sections 1, 3, and 5 are very short while the other sections are fairly long. What purposes are served by this arrangement of material? Are sections 3 and 5 logically coordinate with the rest?
- 8 What is the thesis of Baker's article? Where is it first stated? In general, how is it supported?
- 9 What use does Baker make of specific examples from the history of science? Point out one or two particularly convincing examples.
- 10 In your opinion how successful is Baker in his arguments against those who deny that science has any value apart from contributions to material welfare?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Which of Baker's four grades of opinion on the values of science do you find most appealing? Why?
- 2 If science both serves material ends and is an end in itself what about music art and literature—do they both serve material ends and exist as ends in themselves or are they wholly ends in themselves? Explain the grounds for your answer
- 3 What do you think is the most widespread attitude toward the values of science? Describe the typical person holding this attitude
- 4 Give reasons for believing that the unimportant worker in science makes a genuine contribution to it while the unimportant composer or artist adds nothing essential. What about the unimportant writer—does he contribute anything essential to literature, or not?
- 5 If in the totalitarian view truth has no intrinsic excellence what do the totalitarians believe does have intrinsic excellence—that is, what for them takes the place of truth as the highest good?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Society should subsidize a limited number of talented people to increase knowledge without regard to practical value
- 2 How a scientist can be deeply religious
- 3 How science can help in providing a better view of life
- 4 An example of the scientific urge in children
- 5 The pleasures of an amateur interest in science

## ANTHONY STANDEN

born 1906 himself a scientist with interests in chemistry and entomology wrote *Science is a Sacred Cow* [From the book *Science is a Sacred Cow*, Copyright 1950, by Anthony Standen Published by E P Dutton & Co Inc]

### Science Can Be Silly

When a white-robed scientist, momentarily looking up from his microscope or his cyclotron, makes some pronouncement for the general public, he may not be understood, but at least he is certain to be believed. Statesmen, industrialists, ministers of religion, civic leaders, philosophers, all are questioned and criticized, but scientists—never. They are exalted beings, who, standing at the very topmost pinnacle of popular prestige, proudly practice their monopoly of the unchallenged formula "It has been scientifically proved." The "it" can be almost anything.

Our world has thus become divided into scientists, the infallible men of reason and research, and nonscientists, sometimes contemptuously called 'laymen.' The dividing line is drawn by the fact that science has achieved so much while the layman knows so little—not enough, certainly, to argue back. He might not even want to argue back, for the claims of science are extremely inviting. Its benefits—from television to penicillin—are legion, and a mere layman, his imagination stupefied by these wonders, is duly humble. Since it is only human nature to accept such flattery, the scientists easily come to share the laymen's opinion about themselves. The laymen, on the other hand, get their information about scientists from the scientists, and so the whole thing goes round and round like the Whip at Coney Island.

The individual scientist—it must be emphasized—is not inordinately conceited, on the contrary, he is often a most modest and diffident person. Yet, when he thinks of himself as a scientist, he almost always attributes to himself a delightful array of such qualities as accuracy, reasoning power, intellectual curiosity, tolerance and a kind of reverent humility before the facts of nature. So, as a group, these men of science have come to possess a fabulous collective ego, as inflated as a skillfully blown piece of bubble gum.

In our science-minded world, it is easy to begin to share the exhilaration of this collective ego at a fairly young age. The great masses of our youth have known "Biology I" in college, or at least "Introductory Science" in high school. They come out of the mill with one of three possible reactions: either 1) they hated it and have depressing memories of



cutting up dogfish, 2) they found the subject interesting, but the teacher dull, and nourish for the rest of their lives a wistful yearning to know more, or 3) they gobble up everything and acquire a fierce faith that science can solve all the problems of the universe. People in the first two categories are genuine, understandable human beings. But the third class! So far are they from having learned any humility, they are known in every high school and among the freshmen and sophomores of every college as the most insufferable, cocksure know-it-alls. If they go on to be professional scientists their sharp corners are rubbed down but they undergo no fundamental change. As a group, they most decidedly are not set apart from the others by their tolerance, perceptiveness or patient humility, as their teachers would like to have us believe. Rather do they seem to think that they are entitled to pour scorn on other subjects from a very great height. They become technocrats. They seem to believe that no social or diplomatic problem is beyond their competence to discuss, if not to solve. They eat concentrated vitamins. They are, in the fullest sense of the word, uneducated.

That there are plenty of *good* reasons for knowing something about science goes without saying, whether you are farming or mending a Ford car. Atomic energy, of course, has given a great boost to science education, for persons of all ages from 5 to 100. Obviously we, or our elected representatives, should know as much as we possibly can about uranium 235 and the neutrons, for it is very little good having just a nodding acquaintance with a neutron.

### THE "SCIENTIFIC METHOD"

Despite these excellent reasons for studying science in big doses, the scientists stick to their attitude that the *real* reason is something else, something higher and loftier altogether. They are like the Elizabethan poets, who would praise their mistress's eyes, nose, lips, neck, etc., and then say 'but if you could see the virtue that dwells within her breast, you would find that even more delightful still.' For it is not the base, utilitarian results of science that they advertise most. It is always the 'scientific method' or the 'scientific attitude' or a variety of other hidden mystical virtues. Useful facts are mere dross. It is this underlying 'method' that purifies and refines the soul. And so a sanguine chemist, William J. Wissener, currently head of an industrial chemical research lab in Reading, Pa., tells us "Science teaches us how to think straight, how to avoid deceit, and how to benefit mankind most by honoring the authority of Truth." Or take the words of another scientific educator, B. C. Gruenberg, most recently a special consultant with the National Health Council, who says 'Scientists have a special responsibility to help

adults and adolescents to find new conceptions and ideas to replace the traditional religious beliefs about . . . the meaning and value of human life, which science has made untenable" (Explanatory note Gruenberg means that the traditional beliefs have been made untenable, not human life )

Now the disillusioning truth is that "the scientific method," however pretentious it sounds, quite often means only the patient use of horse sense. It is when scientists scorn horse sense and give "the scientific method" a rude yank to stretch it into a technique of philosophy that their antics become most comic. When they get into this expansive mood, they start murmuring reverently about "correlations," for this is one of their favorite words. They measure two things, and find that when one of them changes the other also changes—this is called a beautiful correlation, and it is pursued with a solemn, deadpan intensity, as if a correlation were a thing in itself. Very often they argue that the one thing *caused* the other, when it might quite well have been the other way round. Thus they will offer an argument that, in principle, runs like this: a man gets drunk on Monday on rye and soda water, he gets drunk on Tuesday on Scotch and soda water, and on Wednesday on gin and soda water. What caused his drunkenness? Obviously, the common factor—the soda water.

Since scientists have such breathtaking confidence in their own ability—in their collective ability, that is to say—it is small wonder that they never pause long enough to teach what are the limitations of science. Yet there may be limits to what science can do. Consider this question: Can science disprove ghosts? The average science-ridden citizen assumes that, of course, it can. And yet, is that true? Suppose (just for the sake of amiable argument) that ghosts can occasionally appear when the psychological conditions are just right, and suppose—as might quite well be true—that one necessary condition for the appearance of a ghost is the *absence* of a scientist. Then "science" would go on investigating ghost after ghost, and would "disprove" every one of them while they kept on appearing whenever the scientists were not looking.

This is a simple case, perhaps not a very important one, illustrating the impossibility of proving anything negative by the scientific method. At least it is enough to suggest that if science has any more serious defects than the inability to perceive an occasional spook in the corner, it is of the utmost importance that all citizens should know what they are.

According to the cult of "the scientific method," scientists not only do wonderful things but also teach wonderful things. Teachers are, indeed, the front men of science, and it is therefore instructive to observe how funny they can be when they are trying to be most serious.

To woo students to their classes, some scientists offer this inducement "Learn about our environment" This particular lure is emphasized by those who teach geology. The underlying idea is based on a saying that scientists like to trot out "Man is the product of his heredity and his environment" What they mean is that a man is the product of his heredity and his environment, for no one knows what the heredity of "man" is (The Missing Link is still missing) The statement is open to dispute, because a strict Calvinist, for example, would say that the fate of man depends upon a predestination which overrides any amount of heredity and environment But then a predestinarian Calvinist is not a scientist, so what he says doesn't count, and the scientists have said to one another so often, "Man is the product of his heredity and his environment," that they all believe it without question

Professional educators play up the environment even more strongly than the regular scientists The environment is regarded as a fixed, steady sort of *thing* that is there, and the recipient of the education must be adjusted to it. No education, obviously, should be designed to turn out social misfits, but it is *not* true that man *must* be adjusted to suit his environment Man is remarkably capable of adjusting his environment to suit himself In fact, science itself is probably man's greatest tool in effecting changes in his environment If we meekly accepted the idea that man must be adjusted to his environment, where should we get our reformers from? Where our revolutionaries? And what would our scientists do for a living?

### PHYSICS. THE BEST SCIENCE

Of all the sciences, physics is the most highly developed and also the oldest, for it got well under way as early as the 17th Century The other sciences are right in paying deference and respect to physics, which is unquestionably science at its best

But the first thing to realize even about physics is its extraordinary indirectness Physics appears to begin with very straightforward questions, but there are catches in it right from the start For example every high school student is told that according to Aristotle the heavier of two weights would fall faster, but that Galileo, by dropping two different weights from the leaning tower of Pisa, "proved" that Aristotle was wrong, for the weights were found to fall in exactly the same time And yet Aristotle was right The heavier body does fall faster, because of air resistance, which slows up the lighter body more than the heavier Only a very little faster, it is true, and the difference may not be detectable, but since scientists claim that they use words with such great precision, it is fair to hold them to it If you press a physicist on this point, he will

readily admit that what he means is that the two bodies would fall equally fast *in a vacuum*. If you press him further, he will very reluctantly admit that nobody has ever produced a complete vacuum. And so it turns out that not the physicist but Aristotle is talking about the actual world in which we live.

This is characteristic of physics all the way through. Yet it is because of this, and not in spite of it, that physics is the best of the sciences. For physics is not about the real world, it is about "abstractions" from the real world. It has all the proper attributes—the importance of exact measurement, the reduction of everything to mathematics, the pitilessly rigid trains of logical thought—that are commonly ascribed to everything that goes by the name of science. But physics is *not* a body of indisputable and immutable Truth, it is a body of well supported probable opinion only, and its ideas may be exploded at any time.

Scientists have a horror of the Absolute, but as a word, rather than as a concept, for few of them have any clear idea of what it means. Relativity is accepted with great delight by modern scientists, for Einstein is regarded as having done away with Absolutes, replacing Absolute Time and Absolute Space by a four-dimensional space time continuum which is pleasingly Relative. The momentum of this carries over into other fields, and everything possible is now considered relative: morals are relative, meanings of words are relative, even truth is relative, and the more things a man can describe as Relative, the greater his prestige as a Modern Thinker. And yet Einstein did not destroy the Absolute. He made space and time relative, but in order to do this he had to take something else—the velocity of light—and make it absolute. The velocity of light occupies an extraordinary place in modern physics. It is now lese majesty to criticize the concept of the velocity of light. It is a sacred cow within a sacred cow, and it is just about the Absolutest Absolute in the history of human thought.

If the idols of scientists were piled on top of one another in the manner of a totem pole, the topmost one would be a grinning fetish called Measurement.

The physicist quite naturally sees everything in terms of measurements, and he feels he has to indoctrinate his pupils with this idea. Show a magnet to a physicist and to a man in the street, and what happens? The physicist wants to measure its "magnetic moment," the other fellow wants to use it to pick up phonograph needles. And if a pneumatic drill opens up in the street, the physicist, instead of putting his fingers in his ears, will measure the sound in decibels.

Since measurement is so frightfully important, quite naturally physicists have very decided ideas about it. Instead of explaining what a thing

is, they say how many times bigger it is than some other thing—for that is all that measurement really is. Thus, for a physicist, the means of measuring a thing is the thing: light is just so many lumens, noise so many decibels and a magnet so many units of magnetic moment. And so their way of explaining any of the more abstruse concepts of physics is to have the students measure them at once, although of course the students may produce exactly the right measurement, and still not have any idea of what they have measured.

Let us apply all this to the awesome matter of the atom. When physicists say that the diameter of a hydrogen atom is two ten-millionths of a centimeter, do they mean that they took a ruler marked out in ten-millionths of a centimeter, brought it up alongside a hydrogen atom and compared the two? Not a bit. They simply made one of their hypotheses, they reasoned that if the diameter of the atom were that number of ten-millionths, then the results of a certain experiment would be thus and so, exactly the way it was actually found to be. A great many of the measurements of physics are of this indirect kind. It is not true that we know about atoms *because* atoms have been weighed, measured and counted, although physicists often imply this. It is not true that there must be atoms because there is an atomic bomb: the existence of the bomb is indisputable, but is it atomic? It is within the bounds of possibility that the physicists of a hundred years from now will look back with amusement to the days "when they thought that that crude bomb of theirs had something to do with 'atoms,' as they used to say. Of course we know better now."

Do we have any positive proof, then, that there are such things as atoms? The answer is that physics can never *prove* things in the way things are proved in mathematics, by eliminating *all* of the alternative possibilities, for it is not possible to say what they are. A physicist once said, "*We have seen our atoms*." He didn't really mean it. The idea at the back of his mind, being translated, is 'the path of a single high-speed atom can be observed and photographed.' Now just suppose that a hunter were to announce, "I saw a tiger on Long Island yesterday", if, on close questioning, he were to back down to "what I mean is, I saw the trail of a tiger," would he be believed in the clubhouse?

### BIOLOGY NONSCIENTIFIC

In biology there is the same tendency to speak pompous nonsense that characterizes scientists of all kinds. But does biology have the virtues of science? That is more questionable.

If you take a course in biology, or read any of the textbooks, you will find extremely little that can be called scientific in any scientific sense.

Here is a representative sample of what is handed out. The fundamental stuff of all living matter is called protoplasm—all living matter is organized into cells—the lowest animals have only one cell—the body of any higher animal, including man, shows many resemblances to that of a cat (cut up that cat!)—anabolism and catabolism—stimulus and response—thallophytes bryophytes pteridophytes spermatophytes—and so on and on and on to the end of the course, and where in the name of heaven is anything scientific in all that? You can get full marks in the course, without encountering *any* train of reasoning.

To pep all this up a little and give it a grander sound, the biologists are fond of issuing official pronouncements as if they were keys to nature's highest secrets. Such a one is "The cell is the fundamental unit of all life." If ever you undergo a quiz in biology, that is *the answer*. But does it mean anything? If the cell is a unit, in the sense that bigger things are made up of it, this only means that living organisms are made up of cells (all but those annoying exceptions called 'slime molds'). But if the cell is a *fundamental* unit, what does "fundamental" mean? Think about this as much as you like, or as much as you can. But if you are facing a quiz, do not worry about it, for you will never be asked what, if anything, is 'fundamental'.

In slavish imitation of physics, biologists feel that they have to give neat precise definitions of their terms. The results are ludicrous. It is extremely difficult to define 'life'—fortunately it is not at all necessary. "Stimulus" and 'response' are defined in terms of one another. No biologist can define a *species*. And as for a *genus*—all attempts come down to this "A genus is a grouping of species that some recognized taxonomic specialist has called a genus." No kidding, it really is that.

By far the most sweeping, and by far the best, of the great generalizations of biology is the Theory of Evolution, if it can be called a theory that has by no means been tested by experiment. It is not possible, of course, to go back into distant geological ages to find out what actually did happen, and so we can only see what happens *now*. Biologists have been breeding *Drosophila* (banana flies, their favorite creatures for this kind of work) for 40 years, or for more than a thousand generations, they have made flies with red eyes, short wings, hairless, dwarfed and stunted. But they have never succeeded in evolving *Drosophila* into a fly of a different species, much less into any more distant creature. Just the same scientists have been saying, to themselves and to the outside world, "Scientists always test their theories by experiment," so often that by sheer dint of repetition it has come to be believed by everybody else, and even by the scientists themselves.

What is the theory of evolution? It is very easy to find out in a vague

way, but very difficult to find out in a precise way. This is because it is really two theories, one vague and one precise. The vague theory has been abundantly proved, with an overwhelming mass of evidence. The precise theory has never been proved at all but, like relativity, it is accepted as a faith.

Vague evolution is rather difficult to formulate because it is vague, but it is extremely easy to see. It points to the striking similarities, in every detail, between the bodies of men and of the apes, to the slightly more distant resemblances between men and other mammals, to the duck-billed platypus, and so on and so on, as can be found in many a fine book. Whatever this proves—and it would seem to prove that all forms of life are connected in some way—it is indisputable.

But in what way? To answer this question, we need a precise theory. The precise theory of evolution is that all forms of life on the earth today came from some original form of life by a series of changes which, at every point, were natural and *explainable by science*. Now the reason why evolution has always inspired such intense popular interest ever since the days of Darwin is that it is not a purely scientific theory, but one that involves moral, that is, human, behavior. It is quite different from, say, the theory that the earth revolves round the sun or the sun round the earth because, in the last analysis, it is of very little human importance which goes round which. The question at issue with the precise theory of evolution is whether God gave things a sort of evolutionary shove every now and then (or perhaps all the time), or whether He just wound things up in the beginning and let them rip.

Unfortunately biologists rarely talk about God (or at least only on Sundays when they are off duty). With this limitation they can never discuss the implications of evolution properly, and by mixing up the vague theory of evolution with the precise theory they give the impression that both have been proved, whereas the precise theory is much further from being proved than men are from flying to the moon. To quote a paleontologist, R. S. Lull, professor emeritus at Yale: "Since Darwin's day, Evolution has been more and more generally accepted, until now in the minds of informed, thinking men there is no doubt that it is the only logical way whereby the creation can be interpreted and understood." We are not so sure, however, as to the *modus operandi*, but we may rest assured that the process has been in accordance with great natural laws, some of which are as yet unknown, perhaps unknowable."

And so biologists continue to "rest assured." But one may be tempted to ask, if some of the great natural laws are as yet unknown, how do we know that they are there? And if some are "perhaps unknowable," how do we know that they are "logical"?

Psychologists, following the biologists, who are themselves following the physicists, are the unhappiest crowd of all. Psychologists like to believe that they base their conclusions on fact substantiated by scientific evidence, but they don't, for two of their favorite postulates are "All human behavior has a cause" and "Potentially, all human behavior can be measured and described." There is *no* experimental proof of these interpretations. Some human behavior may have a cause, and some can be measured and described, but these sweeping statements about *all* human behavior are nothing but a pious hope. Psychologists pay lip service to the scientific method and use it whenever it is convenient. But when it doesn't suffice they make wild leaps into cloudy theory, sped only by their own jet propelled fancy. So Professor Gardner Murphy of the College of the City of New York tells us in the foreword of his textbook on psychology: "For what it may be worth, I venture to put down here the few doctrines or opinions which I regard as fundamental in the present text, emphasizing that despite the incompleteness of evidence I feel these principles to be in a sense the framework with reference to which all the details may be seen." What a scientist! Imagine, if you can, a physicist saying anything like this. The psychologist knows the evidence is incomplete, but he just *feels* what is right!

If even simple emotions elude investigation by gauges and recording instruments, what happens to our more complicated feelings? Hatred is akin to love—we all know this, but we didn't learn it from any scientist. The fascination of horror is one of the commonest experiences, but it eludes the galvanometer. For certain very human feelings it would not even be possible to use a galvanometer. Byron describes the seduction of a lady (a subject he knew well enough, unscientifically but successfully) who, "whispering 'I will ne'er consent'—consented." This lady was in a delightful state of mixed emotions, surely most interesting to a psychologist, but how could these emotions be "measured"? To connect the lady up to any kind of apparatus would ruin the intimacy of the scene.

It is amazing, but true, that it is possible to go clear through a course in psychology without ever hearing what the various virtues are, and which are intellectual and which moral. "But there is no agreement about 'virtues,'" reply the psychologists, shocked in their scientific souls. To this it can be replied that there is no agreement about psychology either. There are very many points in psychology about which it is only possible to say "Freud and his followers see this in terms of so-and so, the Adlerians see it some other way, while the Watsonian behaviorists are unable to see it at all."



It is probable that, hundreds of years from now, people will look back at our 'objective' psychologists, with their reflex arcs and their stimuli and responses, in the same way in which we look back at the medieval schoolmen who are alleged to have debated how many angels could dance on the point of a pin. Meanwhile, since all of them pride themselves on their ability to reason, and most of them have a tendency to be a little humorless, let them consider the following simple piece of reasoning: "There's many a true word spoken in jest", scientists are abominably solemn, therefore scientists miss many a true word.

### SOCIAL SCIENCES' ARE THEY SCIENCE?

A busy group of people who call themselves social scientists, awaiting the arrival of the social Galileo, are zealously writing such papers as "The Relationship of Population Density to Residential Proximity as a Factor in Marriage Selection," and "Sample of 1,001 Remarks Overheard in Manhattan."

There are plenty of reasons why the "social sciences" aren't science at all and, as a matter of fact, there are some who will admit this. One of the reasons is that there isn't anything fixed or constant about what the sociologist is studying. A sociologist can never specify the object of his study as "copper" or *Camponotus pennsylvanicus* (one of the species of ant). Instead he has to say, "This investigation was made on a group of 1,073 high school children from 14 to 15 years of age in south-central Illinois," with the perfectly clear understanding that it might be different for children under 14, or over 15, or in other parts of Illinois, and finally that it may no longer be true next year, or even tomorrow, for social conditions may by then have changed in south-central Illinois. Thus, Dr. Kinsey's celebrated report is mistitled *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*; it should be *The Sexual Behavior of 5,300 Men Who Were Willing To Talk About It*.

The easiest way to introduce pseudo-science is to call any investigation 'the testing of a hypothesis.' If a social scientist wants to find out whether rich people are more likely to vote Republican than poor people, he first 'frames the hypothesis that there is a positive correlation between income and Republicanism' and then goes out and 'tests the hypothesis.' This can always be done, and it makes anything at all sound wonderfully scientific. A biologist, if he wishes to know how many toes a cat has, does not 'frame the hypothesis that the number of feline digital extremities is four, or five, or six,' he simply gets a cat and counts. A social scientist prefers the more long-winded expression every time because it gives an entirely spurious impression of scientificity to what he is doing.

Not even free will daunts a dyed-in-the-wool science fiend. Every

week there are reports of such things as teen-age girls leaving lipstick kisses on billboards, windows and milk bottles, or bobbysoxers rolling their socks so low they cannot be seen. Such instances of the infinite unpredictability of man affects social scientists no more than the asylum inmate is when told that he is not Napoleon.

### SCIENCE VERSUS DEMOCRACY

In the realm of practical politics there is plenty of reason for watching scientists very carefully. We are a little shy about doing this because of a widespread belief that science is intimate, if not identical, with democracy. The scientists, of course, are not shy about propagating this belief themselves.

Yet science and democracy are *not* the same thing. They differ greatly, both in what they are aiming at and in how they go about things. The aim of science is truth. The aim of democracy is the most just kind of popular government. Truth is a matter of whether things *are* this way or that; politics is a question of whether we *should* do this or the other, having in mind what is best, either for the individual or for society. Science can no more help us decide what is best than a locomotive can take the place of a compass.

Scientists who like to tinker with history as well as hydrogen have another slippery syllogism for the gullible. It goes: "The 19th Century was a time of grand expansion for science, it was also a time of grand expansion of democracy, therefore science and democracy are one." But this is, to say the least, quite unscientific reasoning. It is worth noting that the 20th Century, in which democracy has been if anything on the wane, has so far been a period of even greater expansion of science. The Germans didn't get the atomic bomb, but their V2 was taken up avidly by our Army. Their chemists are still, as they have been for 100 years, magnificent—but only the most tortured "scientific method" of reasoning could add this up to make "a century of German democracy."

The truth is that *freedom*—the word and the idea—can be seriously menaced by those scientists (especially the social ones) whose god is that most fuzzily defined and most tyrannous of all deities: *Objectivity*. When a scientist becomes really "objective" about freedom, he cannot even say what it is. He notices that the word "freedom" seems to convey different things to different people: to us, freedom of the press means freedom from interference by the government; to the Russians, it means freedom from interference by the capitalist cartels. The Russians are astonished at our vigilance and suspicion of a government which, according to our own political theory, we elected ourselves. An "objective" scientist has little difficulty in understanding this argument. But he can-

not understand the feeling of the backwoodsmen in the frontier days—probably the freest men there ever were—when “every man was as good as any other, and a darned sight better” One “objective” scientist, Lyman Bryson, making a great scientific effort, defines a free society as “one in which there is a rich variety of normalities” This is all right as far as it goes It goes only until the shock troops or the commissars come in saying, “There isn’t a rich enough variety of normalities around here, some of you have got to do something different”

To be still more objective and still more dangerous, the scientist may argue that since “freedom” is understood differently by different persons it is only a subjective feeling, a state of mind What causes this subjective feeling? Obviously, the “conditioning” (or “education”) that the person has received A Russian thinks of freedom differently because he was conditioned differently, that’s all Anybody is free who thinks he is free, according to his past conditioning The scientific conclusion would then be very simple. Stop worrying about what freedom is, condition everybody alike, and give them whatever they have been taught to think of as freedom To make the whole thing easier to carry out in practice, it will be well to condition people to think of, as freedom, something that will be easy to provide for them Bread and circuses, for instance, or popcorn and movies

Aldous Huxley has given us a fair warning “The most important Manhattan projects of the future,” he has prophesied, “will be vast government sponsored inquiries into what the politicians and the participating scientists will call ‘the problem of happiness’—in other words, the problem of making people love their servitude”

There are plenty of signs that this is no false alarm “What science can do for men is not enough,” a former general secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science has said “This must be subordinate to what science can do to men” Instantly and precisely at this point, we must say to the scientist Halt—and get back to your lab

It is not Galileo’s fault When he dropped his two weights from the tower in Italy, he didn’t know what he was starting He started the modern science of physics But according to the official account, he also started the modern scientific method “The method” has gone a long way since Galileo, and a long way away from physics

It has not only gotten worse, however, it has also gotten funnier—which is some consolation So, while we must watch scientists carefully we shall find the strain of vigilance lightened by a great deal of amusement We can, and should, laugh out loud at scientists This will, in fact, be the very best way to prevent them from regulating us, or averaging us, or conditioning us to synthetic happiness For what are they doing? It is

the most laughable thing in the world. They are all crowding round and bowing low before a Sacred Cow.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What kind of mistake can be made in reasoning from correlation?
- 2 Why can't science prove that something (for example, a ghost) does *not* exist?
- 3 Why is physics "a body of well supported probable opinion only"?
- 4 What "absolute" is necessary to the theory of relativity? What things formerly thought to be absolutes are made relative by the theory of relativity?
- 5 For what reasons, in Standen's view, is it impossible for psychology to learn the truth about human emotions?
- 6 What dangers does he see in assuming that science is closely connected with democracy?
- 7 Characterize the *tone* of Standen's article. What do you think was his purpose in adopting such a tone? Does he achieve that purpose? How?
- 8 What is the significance of the order in which Standen takes up the sciences? What would the effect have been if he had taken them up in reverse order?
- 9 What point about the validity of scientific theories in general is Standen trying to make by questioning individual theories? Point out an especially good example.

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Do you think Standen is opposed to science as a whole, or only to certain things in it? If only to certain things, what are they?
- 2 What does he mean by saying that science is a sacred cow?
- 3 In what way does he defend his own joking about science? Do you think his defense is justifiable?
- 4 What improvements in scientific thinking do you believe would come about if scientists developed a better sense of humor?
- 5 Do you think there is a real danger to freedom from scientists? If so, what is it?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Science is simply horse sense
- 2 Is it more probable that sea serpents do exist, or do not exist?
- 3 Popular misconceptions about evolution
- 4 Scientists are (or are not) dangerous people
- 5 Why I want (or don't want) to be a scientist.

## RICHARD L. MEIER

born 1920 a former executive secretary of the Federation of American Scientists is a chemist now connected with the Program of Education and Research in Planning at the University of Chicago [From Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, June 1951 Reprinted by permission]

### *The Origins of the Scientific Species*

Have you ever had a conversation with a scientist and then started to wonder why and how he became what he was? Did you ever feel instinctively that one investigator was typical of his profession and that another in many ways was exceptional? Impressions like this imply that there must be some regularities in the social origins and personalities of scientists. Not only do they seem to come in distinct species, but in recognizable varieties within the larger subdivision.<sup>1</sup>

Most scientists in America today made the critical decision during the '20s and '30s which led eventually to the laboratory or the designing room. Somewhere between the ages of ten and eighteen the issue was settled for each of them and after that, education, work, and even many pleasures were closely conditioned by the choice. The most remarkable feature one encounters over and over again is the large proportion of scientists who chose their careers on the basis of virtually no information or experience relating to what was really involved in the scientific professions. Very few are able to isolate and identify the underlying motivation. Thus the original choice was usually subjective in nature, and therefore highly unscientific—according to standards later acquired.

The essential clues to a generalized picture lie in the social milieu of the '20s and '30s. This was the era of *Main Street*, *Dodsworth*, *Arrowsmith*, and *The Big Money*. There was a rapid, chaotic urbanization and a decline of the rural community. It became generally recognized that henceforth the pathway to higher social status and economic security led through the colleges and universities to the professions and managerial posts. Thus the land grant universities doubled and redoubled their registration, and the enterprising country colleges did almost as well. Any institution with tuition low enough to permit a fellow with grit and determination to work his way through obtained a fair cross section of the bright youngsters of the period. Student bodies ranging west from Penn State and North Carolina developed remarkably similar social environments whereas the Ivy League schools, due to tradition and high tuition, remained individual and atypical, and New York City, because of the press of recent immigrants, developed into a special case.

## THE CHEMISTS

Chemists are the most abundant of the scientific species. Their origins have on the whole been neither humble nor magnificent, but mainly lower middle class. They are sons of school teachers, small businessmen, successful farm owners, and lesser folk who had strong ambitions toward joining these ranks but, for one reason or another, failed. As youngsters they were encouraged to read widely, but the channels available were limited because more than three-quarters grew up in a Main Street atmosphere. They became both curious and romantic. Therefore it was quite natural that, when the subject of career came up, a profession was seized upon which was novel, romantic, and offered release from the tedium of the small town. The books available in small Carnegie libraries or high school collections had much to do with this decision, since all had such titles as *The Romance of Modern Chemistry* and *Science Remaking the World*. The fact that chemists were getting jobs when other graduates were unsuccessful was also a powerful argument, but this was known only to a minority at the time of decision.

During most of the inter war period more than half of all entering science students were chemistry majors. They were pressed into laboratories well beyond their rated capacities. Many were ruthlessly flunked out, but those who remained were of the same background as those who failed. No real selection occurred until the junior year when those who could not comprehend thermodynamics drifted into biochemistry, bacteriology, ceramics, and related fields. Those who mastered this subject went on to become chemical engineers or chemists, either organic or physical. Thus chemistry tended to retain most of its best minds, graduate schools in the '30s were blessed with far more than their share of higher competences and rare intellects—a fact which reflects today in the thickness and quality of the research journals and the vigor of chemical technology.

Chemists are seldom rebels or radicals. In an organization they grumble extensively but still are responsible, patient, and cooperative. They constitute at present the largest single reservoir of managerial talent in the technical area, and these capacities will be exploited even more in the years to come. The chemists' politics are usually a non violent conservatism or liberalism (this depends upon your own vantage point) which is compatible with service both in corporations and in government agencies.

## THE ENGINEERS

Whenever I talk to engineers about the current state of engineering they invariably make an exception of chemical engineers and their achievements. Why is this so? One man explained that chemical engineers

have only a top dressing of engineering. Scratch a chemical engineer, he said, and you will find underneath nothing but a chemist who is used to dealing in tons rather than grams. *Engineers are different.*

He is right—everyone seems to agree that engineers *are* different. The bulk of today's engineers are more absorbed in their professional duties and less involved in either management or community activities. They are mostly apolitical, but when they do have views, these are of a stereotyped conservative nature. They find it difficult and exhausting to express themselves in writing or formal speech.

The reasons are not hard to find, since the engineer has had a harder struggle rising into the professional classes. Most engineers were sons of skilled workers, mechanized farmers, service workers, and the least literate of the lower middle classes. There was little encouragement to read at home but multifarious sports events to participate in, jalopies to fix, and miscellaneous contrivances to fiddle with. For these youngsters engineering was a subject where you learned 'what made things tick.' Thus it was natural to decide at ages 16–18, when the question of career came to a head, that one owed it to himself to go to college and become an engineer.<sup>2</sup>

Engineers had to contribute more to their own support while in college, and had a more demanding study program. There was no time to get a broad education when problem sets were demanding solutions. Thus it was natural that, on campus at least, engineering students became a race apart from the others, developing their own humor and informal associations. They failed gloriously in economics and English composition, but gained respect for their facility with the slipstick which dangled from their belts in a brown leather holster. Their bull sessions were uninspiring because only two topics seemed to engross their attention besides course work, namely sports and sex.

Yet it would be unfair to draw these lines too sharply. At every engineering school there was an elite—much of it the sons or close relatives of contemporary engineers, but some from every section of society, who embraced a much broader conception of the world. They were as brilliant outside of the engineering school as they were within it. The real reputation of a school depended upon the size and capacities of this 5–20 per cent segment because today they constitute the cream of the profession—the consulting engineers and the top executives.

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were sons of ministers, rabbis, deacons, cantors, and other church stalwarts. They were exposed from infancy to a wide variety of ideas, lived in homes with considerable libraries, and were nurtured on idealism, ethical behavior, and a rationalized morality. The ease with which they handled mathematical abstraction as youths made the unfolding physical world highly attractive. Here was something truly fundamental, here lay secrets of the universe.

There were not more than a dozen significant physics departments in the United States before the mid-'30's, but Hitler's persecutions resulted in the great enrichment of American research starting at that time so that the production of finished physicists of all kinds reached a peak by 1941-42. Thus the bulk of the physicists were still absurdly young when the war directed their activity into two large scale efforts—electronic devices, including radar, and the atomic bomb.

The physicist by nature is politically radical. His mind is schooled in the proposition that progress is made by discarding various assumptions and premises and thereby making it possible to create a more powerful theory upon a simpler underpinning. The physicist, more than any scientist, deals with abstractions which make nonsense out of observations based upon the commonplace, he is educated in doubt and can disregard evidence which to the ordinary observer is both convincing and conclusive. Thus many physicists chose a vague leftist political philosophy, partly as the only relatively rational set of value premises which was offered at the time ('36 to '40) in the world of ideas. The idea of an international community of science has from the beginning been very real to the physicists, while for the chemist it has been but dimly comprehended, and the engineer is almost completely oblivious.

The developments of the last decade have brought on many value conflicts within the minds of physicists which have often resulted in an apparent change of personality. No one hates secrecy with as much emotional vigor as a physicist, yet hardly any are more thoroughly afflicted with it. Everyone knows the disillusionment that accompanied the lack of international agreement on atomic energy but few can imagine the confusion of thought, the loss of goals, and even faith, that followed it. For many the fun has gone out of physics, they feel stale and unproductive.

#### THE VARIOUS BIOLOGISTS

The biologists are a complex assemblage. The profession can only be successfully described as the conjunction of several quite different streams of talent.

One important group has already been mentioned. These are the chemistry majors who bowed to thermodynamics and therefore moved into

areas where their laboratory techniques were welcomed and the theory was less abstract. These were almost uniformly from the lower middle and professional classes and brought with them the same reasonable conservatism described earlier.

There is another group which is made up of exceptional minds which developed under agricultural surroundings. There was no material to experiment with in their early environment except the plants and animals which are the central theme of farm life. When these men got to college they enrolled in agriculture, botany, zoology, and related areas. The numbers of these scientists dwindled rapidly during the inter-war period because of the intrusion of urban values into the countryside. By 1940 it was mainly the South that was contributing any substantial number to this stream. A large share of the senior biologists in this country have such origins.

One doesn't think of this group as having any political orientation, yet I have often been surprised to detect attitudes voiced which hark back to LaFollette progressivism and quite radical sounding ideas which were discussed widely in the farm areas in the days of William Jennings Bryan. Other than these few minor deviations, they seem to conform quite closely to the Protestant ethic.

Perhaps the largest portion of today's biologists aspired to become medics but were disappointed. One segment of these are the intensely ambitious and capable boys from poorer families who worked their way through college but were unable to finance medical school, and therefore turned their efforts to research in the biological sciences. The other segment came from middle class students who didn't make sufficiently high marks to gain entry to the medical schools and were therefore faced with loss in social status. Many drifted into pharmacy and dentistry but others became very high grade technicians, often in applied research directions. A large number developed into ultra-specialists and so are able to maintain their self-respect as well as adequate incomes. In spite of the difference in social origins the political and social views of these men are remarkably similar to those exhibited by engineers.

### ESTHETICS

Appreciation of music and the visual arts offers a striking demarcation of sensibilities between the scientific professions. The physicists, for instance, will show a strong preference for Bach (I'm told that some experimental physicists will go so "modern" as to embrace Beethoven as a favorite). Probably 95 per cent of all physicists are addicted to classical music and many are musicians themselves. Art criticism among circles of physicists and their wives is perhaps as sophisticated as one finds anywhere in the United States.

The chemists are also inclined to the classics, at least one might say that the majority express these preferences, but chemists want more melody and color and less counterpoint. When chemists congregate one is more likely to hear Brahms, Tchaikowsky (when Tchaikowsky is in vogue), Enesco, or Ferde Grofe. In their music, their artistic sensibilities, and their tastes in home decoration they are definitely "middle-brow," but this range is broad and inclusive since it brings together everyone from *Collier's* readers to *New Yorker* enthusiasts (where a merging occurs with the 'high brows')

The engineers can hardly be classified in this manner because engineers try to accommodate themselves to their surroundings. If they live and work with fundamental scientists they will gradually come to like Gershwin and Offenbach and not be completely bored by Beethoven. In the metropolitan areas, where engineers associate more with their own kind, they take to stage musicals and may also specialize in classics of jazz, swing, or bop. In heavily industrial areas you will find their enthusiasm in sports undimmed and over riding—but, strangely, the best minds among them reserve an hour a week or so for some private effort, such as modern poetry, ancient history, or the anthropology of exotic places, a diversion which seems to release some of the pressures under which they work professionally.

It is interesting to note how exceptional the New York City environment has been in the differentiation of esthetic preferences. Those scientists and engineers who grew up in New York had little more chance of finding a high level of esthetic appreciation at home than those in the rest of the United States, but since New York was *the* cultural center, culture was always close to home and provided an early challenge to the intellect and imagination. In New York, most bright youngsters developed preferences for symphonies and opera, irrespective of profession. One notes this same equalization of tastes regardless of class origin in the San Francisco area, but to a lesser extent.

For the vast majority of scientists, the esthetic sensibilities were already molded by the time they entered college, and since then there has been only minor adaptation, just as the foundations for their political orientations had also already been laid.

### THE DRIFTERS AND HYBRIDS

Generalizations about human society can never be perfect, so one is continually running into instances of careers which fall athwart the neatly defined categories. The supreme accomplishment then is to find new generalizations which apply to virtually all exceptions.

The scientists who changed their minds are a most fascinating study. The "drifter" may be defined as a person who came to realize that he

had chosen an unsuitable profession while still obtaining his training. These men found, to their inner consternation, that there were fields more intellectually exciting than their own. America's cafeteria style education system made it quite possible to salvage most of the effort already invested, so the change of direction was not a formidable undertaking. By this process the armchair sciences, such as theoretical chemistry, physics, and mathematics were greatly enriched from the ranks of the engineers and the applied science areas. There were much larger numbers of incompetents and dilettantes also drifting at the time, but very few of them are identified as scientists today, therefore they can be excluded from this discussion.

The drifters were outstanding among youngsters who were all exceptionally able. They found it easy to discover the standards of behavior in the new profession and adjusted without great difficulty, however, one could always note a more practical bent in their line of theorizing than was common among their colleagues.

The hybrid scientist is a somewhat rarer phenomenon, he is the full-fledged professional who decided that the problems were more vital in some area for which he had no training whatsoever. Crossing over at this late stage takes fortitude because the more solid members of the profession he has been in and those in the new area will mutually cluck their tongues at his brashness. Yet there have now been so many instances in which crossing over has been accomplished successfully that the research councils and foundations have been setting up funds and programs to encourage still more of this sort of thing. Thus physicists may move into metallurgy or meteorology, engineers into psychology, and biology is fair game for everyone. Even the social sciences are receiving a few. The contributions of the hybrids are very rapidly bringing about a unification of the conceptual framework of the various scientific disciplines.

There is one highly successful generalization that can be made about the hybrid scientist. Almost without exception he crosses over from a more precise subject matter to a new area which is less precise in its data gathering and experimental techniques. The hybrid is usually impelled to do this because his curiosity is stronger than the set of behavior patterns communicated to him as characteristic of his speciality. He is problem-oriented and, when the solution to the problem takes him to the boundary of his established competence, he refuses to be intimidated. Armed with the concepts and techniques he has learned and the special insights he has personally deduced, he will vault the barrier—if the new subject matter is more diffuse and qualitative.

Here is encountered a phenomenon among scientists which is often subconscious, occasionally recognized in part, but seldom understood for

what it is—a constant deference to theorists and the wielders of abstraction. The men who fit symbols to the data, or vice versa, generally have the last word. Thus an informal hierarchy of intellect has been created in the scientific community which finds the theoretical physicists, the geneticists, and the mathematical statisticians at the top of the peck order and the ordinary engineers and medicos at the bottom. Therefore a feeling of intellectual superiority reinforces one's confidence in himself if he crosses over into a less organized field of endeavor, but this is missing if the problem were pursued into a more theoretical discipline. In the latter instance the curious scientist will try to establish a cooperative arrangement with some sympathetic specialist rather than educate himself to meet those higher standards of criticism and manipulation of symbols.

### THEIR MORAL CODES

The personal ethos for every person is a product of his social origins as modified by his adult experience. Problems of ethics are much more severe if the individual no longer circulates in the kind of society to which he became accustomed as a child. Most chemists, engineers, and many biologists have ascended in social status and so have had to learn, in later life, how to behave in new and relatively strange surroundings. As one would expect, the adaptation was usually not complete, a high degree of sophistication in the new role was seldom achieved, and elaborate "hole proof" analyses of right versus wrong were rare. The engineers, because in general they have moved farther up the social scale and have had the least booklearning in cultural subjects, tend to exhibit responsibility only toward their families, their employers, and a close circle of suburban or metropolitan friends. The chemists will go farther and usually became responsible participants in the community, while a large portion of the physicists struggle to define their responsibilities in terms of ultimates such as Truth, the liberal viewpoint, or the democratic concept. The attitudes of biologists are so diverse it is best not to generalize.

Scientists are bedeviled because two codes of behavior are demanded of them, and society requires that these be kept separate. In the laboratory and design office an attempt is made to exclude emotional bias and moral standards (mainly because experience tells us they lead to errors in logic and fact finding), while in the remainder of daily life a rigorous scientific outlook is quite reprehensible. The mark of the successful scientist is that he has disciplined himself to compartmentalize his life so that neither side will seriously influence the other. It is not surprising then that many have developed schizoid personalities and that they suffer from the mental strain that is thereby induced.

The scientist's ethical troubles come to a head when his work takes on a recognizable social purpose. The results and consequences of one's own

scientific work are obscured as long as the individual's effort is a highly specialized contribution to knowledge or technological advance. When the consequences of the search for truth are essentially unpredictable, the ethics of the investigators are limited mainly to their dealings with each other. In recent years, however, large and effective research organizations have been put together whose primary purpose (such as, for instance, weapons development) may conflict with the ideals maintained in the "social compartment" of the scientist's life. The most sensitive, of course, do not take risks with their consciences and refuse to join up, but the letting of research and design contracts to existing industrial organizations and academic research institutes means that the issue can be brought right to the scientist in his own laboratory. He must either accede or move out. Knowledge of this destructive aim seldom perturbs the engineer, since cause-and-effect relationships in society and international relations are extremely vague to him. Most of the chemists can effect the compromise without visible qualms, but the physicists are made very uneasy. They later build up highly elaborated rationalizations to justify what they do but are obviously not confident of the logical validity of their alibi.

The dilemma of what to do about the uses to which their findings are put confronts all the scientific species today, but each approaches the issue in a different manner. The engineer does not take the trouble to comprehend it, the chemist is more likely to be the "realist," explaining he couldn't do much about it unless chemists were the rulers, while the physicist sulks and worries, occasionally bursting into a protest. Few biologists have been personally affected as yet (the fraction involved in biological warfare was very small) because their efforts are directed to the betterment of health and the improvement of agriculture—goals which can still be both practical and idealistic. The fact that only biology offers the same ideals that all science did in H. G. Wells' time is another important reason (operating at the sub-conscious level) for the current drift of the best scientific minds into biological subjects.

The differences in background among the scientific species leads to conflicting viewpoints in their national societies and even greater ones in their regional organizations. Scientific groups drawn upon professional lines cannot agree upon what a scientist's duty should be. The coming generation, however, will start from quite different social premises and may actually be able to effect a compromise between these two disparate worlds.

### THE FORTHCOMING GENERATION

The present students view a scientific career as the path to prestige and security, rather than the road to romance and the power to

control the environment The new generation doesn't care to "set the world on fire" Like fire, they see science and engineering as double-edged occupations which may result in either good or evil They hope to earn a decent income with intellectual effort and to live out a normal existence, they expect trouble but do not intend to be responsible for stirring it up

Many students have grasped from their teachers, after spending some time in the departments, that the fun has gone out of physics, and that chemistry has lost its romance This is reflected in the reduced numbers of students intending to continue in chemistry, since the proportion is much smaller now than before the war The number of good minds enrolling is even more reduced, and this is just now showing up in the new crop being brought into the graduate schools—the chemistry professors are going to have a hard time getting adjusted to the level of mediocrity which other departments have always had to put up with There was a post-war expansion in the physics schools, but the attractive power of nuclear studies has already diminished and, in spite of the abnormally high salaries beckoning in the AEC, appears to be declining

Biology has glamor for the youngsters too, and the amount of drifting in that direction is considerable Those with chemical training are intrigued by problems in the prevention of disease and the even more complex processes of aging, while those with background in physics are interested in reproduction or in the nervous system

Up till now the social studies have remained virtually unaffected by the flux in the scientific professions, but their isolation is likely to come to an end in the near future Already there are isolated examples of invasion from the physical sciences, and an interesting post war phenomenon in many American graduate schools was the application of a few physicists and chemists to study for degrees in international relations, economics, social psychology, etc

Today's novices are somewhat less ignorant of science and engineering than their predecessors at the time of decision, since they are often influenced by relatives or family friends who have had scientific experience However the most important rationalizing element in their choice of profession is the counseling service Veterans, in particular, were handed free, and supposedly expert, advice on virtually every campus These choices were affected much less by adolescent dreams and relatively little by experiences while in the service (except for engineering, which attracted many young men who would not have gotten to college at all if it were not for the provisions of the G I Bill) but based mainly upon their individual capacities as demonstrated by scores on aptitude tests<sup>3</sup>

There is another major step that needs to be taken before the selection



of students for scientific training becomes fully 'scientific' It is a procedure for adjusting the supply of each species to fit the predicted demand In Great Britain, for instance, there is a consistent tendency to select and train at least three times too many geologists and architects and far too few chemical engineers<sup>1</sup> Both Tories and Fabians are inclined to favor the intervention of the state so that the supply more nearly conforms to the demand Presumably this would mean creating greater inducements for the study of such subjects as chemical engineering, or it could mean that the crossing over from such subjects as physical chemistry, metallurgy, and mathematics would be encouraged. Because of unanticipated changes in society's need for the respective scientific species, it seems best to overload the curriculum with the more theoretical subjects because the 'law' formulated earlier regarding the creation of hybrids holds almost as universally in Europe as in the United States Thus, by utilizing the crossing-over phenomenon, it is possible to provide for a considerable safety factor, which would be valuable for the survival of a society if it were to face an emergency of five to ten years duration or more

The use of psychological tests to sort out scientific talent means that the class bias distinguishing the species will gradually disappear The social outlook will also change, but in directions which are still indeterminate Perhaps fully rationalized behavior may obtain a release from its imprisonment in the laboratory, infiltrate the character-building going on in the schools and some of the homes, and a variety of scientific humanism may be the keynote of the subsequent generations On the other hand, the requirements of a strict ultra loyalty, demands for conforming in both thought and deed, and the continuous intrusion of the political sphere will make of all the sciences a routine performance of superior skills Theoretically, either of these alternatives would alleviate the discomfort of the schizoid pattern of behavior which is now required for scientific success

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This analysis has been based upon discussions I have had with more than a thousand scientists scattered over the country Such a survey is not strictly scientific because the sample could easily be skewed but since a rigorous study is not justified (the present crops of scientists are evolving in quite a different fashion) this presentation is at least enlightening as to the kinds of interactions which occur between a society and its science

The definition of the species used here has already been set down by the scientific and technical societies Thus if a man identifies himself as a professional chemist and has the qualifications for being accepted as a member of the American Chemical Society he is *ipso facto* a chemist Thus these generalizations cannot be applied to faculty members because they

obviously are not a suitable cross-section of the profession. Representatives in industry and government must be included.

<sup>2</sup> Margaret Mead suggested that these boys were canny enough to deduce "that it was really the engineer in the front office and not the foreman, who was responsible for telling his old man what to do." This possibility of unconscious quest for power introduces a whole series of subconscious factors which might have been profession-determining during the '20s and '30s but are not reviewed here. I don't know how they could be adequately explored at this late date.

<sup>3</sup> In many ways these developments parallel recent trends in British and some Continental university systems. There is a predominant proportion (70-90 per cent) of the students have middle class origins so that fear of failure and therefore loss of social status drive almost all of them to choose the safest areas for specialization, i.e., the ones in which their entrance exams were rated the highest. In these countries all the scientific professions are so thoroughly middle class in outlook that the minority which filters up from the lower strata have to assume quite completely the customs and idiosyncrasies of the middle classes. Differences in attitudes among the scientific species are largely limited to the intellectual hierarchy described earlier, but modified locally by long-standing traditions.

<sup>4</sup> The underlying causes and possible cures for this situation are discussed in my paper "Research as a Social Process," *British Journal of Sociology* 1951.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 From which social class or classes does each of the species of scientists chiefly come?
- 2 What is the predominant political orientation of each species?
- 3 What is the predominant esthetic orientation of each species?
- 4 What is the predominant moral code of each species?
- 5 Do any of Meier's section headings seem to you to be out of the sequence in which you might logically expect to find them?
- 6 Meier states at the beginning of his article that scientists not only "seem to come in distinct species, but in recognizable varieties within the larger subdivision." How is the organization of his article affected by this view?
- 7 Name some basis for classification other than the one actually used (chemists, physicists, etc.), and explain how the material of the article might have been arranged on it instead.
- 8 Explain the relationship of the final section, "The Forthcoming Generation," to the rest of the article. Is it a summary, a prophecy, or what?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 In what field do you think this article would be best placed: science, aesthetics, ethics, sociology, or taxonomy? Why?
- 2 Of what use is it to attempt to list the characteristics of the various scientific "species"?
- 3 Do you think that Meier makes it sufficiently clear that not all scientists in a classification conform to the typical pattern of that classification?

4. What is the dilemma that Meier says confronts all species of scientists? Do you think it is a real dilemma?
5. Do you think that the forthcoming generation of scientists will be less likely to develop "schizoid personalities" (a) because of a new scientific humanism, (b) because of a deadening of all the sciences through political pressure for conformity, or (c) because the problem won't exist?

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. Why I would prefer to be a (chemist, engineer, physicist, biologist, or other kind of scientist)
2. How to make a rational choice among scientific careers
3. A secure job in science, or an exciting career?
4. How can atomic scientists be free of unnecessary political pressure?
5. Conditions which would be necessary to permit the international brotherhood of scientists.

## *Chapter Eight*

# Economics and Politics



THAT THIS NATION, UNDER GOD, SHALL HAVE  
A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM, AND THAT GOVERN-  
MENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE  
PEOPLE, SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH.

LINCOLN

## Introduction

Since man first discovered that he had to eat to live, he has been faced with the problem of working or of getting others to work for him. Now he has met that problem—it is not possible to speak of his final solution of it—has in large part determined the history of the world.

The problem still faces us. We have produced machines to ease our labor and means of transportation to distribute its fruits, but we have not, as members of the human race at any rate, yet reached either a completely successful or a unanimous decision as to how we shall produce and distribute our wealth or what form of government shall regulate or not regulate such production and distribution.

Constantly evolving ways of government and economics have clashed with one another for thousands of years, and the threat of the greatest clash of all confronts us today. Such clashes do not result solely from the problems of economics and government, but also from theories about the nature of man and his rights that in the present complexity are often far removed from food, clothing, and shelter. Nonetheless, few things are more important to men today all over the world than the ways in which they are governed and the ways in which they earn or are permitted to earn their living. And we know from the frequent references of candidates for public office to taxes, labor and management, wages and prices, or from the opposition of the political term *democracy* to the economic term *socialism* how closely economics and government are allied and how mutually interdependent they are.

It takes many years of intensive study to unravel economic and political problems. The following five essays do barely more than take up one end of a thread, each in its own way. Each of the authors has firm convictions, and it is obvious that they all believe in the welfare of mankind and that they all offer evaluations, if not solutions, of basic problems. Each essay expresses implicit conviction in the dignity of man and in personal liberty, and each hopes that man will be fairly and adequately provided for. In each essay there is a concern for man as an individual, and four of them are deeply aware of threats to individuality which present trends in economics and government may

provide Their common approach is re evaluation of the old categories, of the old classifications, of the old ways of looking at things None is ready to discard tradition, all are realistic Their chief focus is upon the tremendous changes taking place in the U S today in techniques of production, in the conception of individual rights, and in individuals' relation to the state and to each other

The article by the N A M , a chapter from a larger work on American enterprise, is at once an idealization of and an apologia for our economic system, while offering new definitions and new insights It is a clear, sometimes subtle piece of exposition, the omissions from which are as significant as the inclusions Definitely written from the point of view of business and manufacturing, it is nonetheless constructive and broad in outlook, and is no mere eulogy of the past or of the status quo

Peter Drucker, a professor in New York University and an economic analyst and business consultant of increasing authority, contributes the second selection, "Revolution by Mass Production" His analysis probes deeply into the extraordinary changes of our time, and he re-evaluates our society in a way which may alter our view of it

"Down on the Farm—New Style" by Walter Goldschmidt, social scientist and teacher, is in a way an extension of Drucker's essay Goldschmidt views the revolution in agriculture brought about by industrialization of farming and its effect upon farm life His essay is, like Drucker's, both explanation and persuasion, and both are excellent illustrations of argument based upon investigation, opinion grounded in carefully observed fact

In "The Illusion of Power," Barbara Ward offers still another evaluation of our times, the interdependence of economics and politics, and the struggle for individualism in a complex world She observes a new division of people, not in the older political terms of Left and Right, for example, but between those who believe in totalitarianism and those who do not This is an impressive and important re evaluation for all of us The second, third, and fourth essays in combination take, as it were, a "new view" of the economic and political order of the twentieth century

The final selection, "Free Speech is for Bold People," is part of a recent constructive book of appraisal, *This American People* by Gerald

W Johnson Johnson reviews positively the right of free speech, a *sine qua non* of our economic and political structure, which in the recent past has been frequently threatened. His essay is more explanation than argument and hence a fine illustration of a well tempered discussion. The affirmative nature of his statement helps us to remember the importance of discussion, debate, and dissent in a democracy, an importance emphasized often in the past and too often forgotten in a period of tension like the sixth decade of the twentieth century.



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS

*The National Association of Manufacturers was organized in 1895 to protect and promote the interests of industry and industrialists [This selection is Chapter 1 of the American Individual Enterprise System—Its Nature, Evolution, and Future, written by the Economic Principles Commission of the National Association of Manufacturers Copyright 1946 McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc Reprinted by permission]*

### *The Nature and Philosophy of the Individual Enterprise System*

We have in the United States an economic system which is without exact parallel in any other nation of the world. The term "economic system" means not merely business as this word is commonly used. It includes all those activities and relations which have an influence upon, or affect, our making a living. It is concerned just as much with the organization of government as with the organization of business, with social problems as with production problems, and with training citizens as with training workers. All these elements are a part of the whole which is the "American way of life." We could not have our present system of production and distribution without our present system of government, nor our present system of government without our present system of business. They are woven together like the threads in a piece of cloth, and anything that affects one part will alter the whole.

More sharply expressed, our economic organization is one in which

- (1) the predominant proportion of economic activities is conducted on a competitive basis, with prices established through competition, rather than by government fiat,
- (2) those who perform these activities have opportunity for pecuniary gain and are subject to the risk of pecuniary loss,
- (3) our economic activities are subject, not to specific direction and control by government, but only to such laws, rules, and regulations within the limits of the federal and state constitutions as are agreed to by the majority of the electorate voting either directly or through their freely selected and legally responsible governmental representatives

## WHY WE CALL IT THE AMERICAN INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISE SYSTEM

To get a term which adequately encompasses such a complicated organization is not easy. Perhaps the term which most closely approximates accuracy is the simple phrase "American Individual Enterprise System." This has the advantage of emphasizing that our organization is unique in the world of today, and, further, that a dominant feature of our system is that our citizens perform their tasks and make their decisions as free individuals rather than as mere puppets of the government.

In other words, the phrase "American Individual Enterprise System" recognizes, first, that in our economic system the production and distribution of goods and services are characteristically performed by private individuals or privately owned organizations operating under rules and regulations designed to realize the basic ideals and objectives of the people. Such rules and regulations are formulated in part directly by individuals or corporate groups through cooperation in trade associations and similar organizations, and in part by individuals acting indirectly through their freely selected governmental representatives.

Second, the term "American Individual Enterprise System" emphasizes that the property required in the production and distribution of goods and services is characteristically owned, controlled, and directed by private or corporate persons, and that these persons are responsible for the use of this property and may enjoy the benefits of the gains or suffer the losses resulting from their operations.

Finally, the term implies that the production and distribution of goods and services by government are limited, as determined by individuals through their freely selected representatives, to those fields in which such government activity is essential for the accomplishment of public policy.

*Comparison with Other Terms in Current Use* The superiority of the phrase "American Individual Enterprise System" over some of the other terms which are currently used is perhaps obvious.

Among these other terms one of the most widely employed is "Free Enterprise System." When properly interpreted this term is reasonably accurate, for "free" in this case means merely that economic restrictions are voluntary rather than imposed arbitrarily by government. But this meaning frequently is lost sight of and the term "Free Enterprise" is interpreted to mean a system in which individuals or voluntary groups of individuals, are free to produce and exchange goods and services without significant let or hindrance from the law. Such complete freedom, of course, is not possible under modern industrial conditions. Furthermore, it is not advocated by anyone. On the contrary everyone, regardless of his political philosophy or his economic predilections now

recognizes that in certain phases of our economic system it is not only desirable, but is absolutely essential, for certain standards and rules to be set by law

A second term almost as widely used to characterize our economic organization is "Private Enterprise System" This to a marked degree is a misnomer We do not have in America, or in any other highly developed country, an exclusively private enterprise system Whole sections of the economy, for example, the post office, harbor dredging, etc., have been taken over by the government In addition, roads are public enterprises, schools are maintained for the most part from public funds, and numerous services of direct pecuniary value, such as the preparation of market analyses, trade reports, and foreign bulletins, are performed by the State Further, the complicated processes of production and distribution are more or less extensively regulated by law, and the owners of property are curtailed in numerous respects in their exercise of the right of private ownership Still further, through excise, income, and property taxes, inroads are made to a greater or less degree on the possible net return to be obtained from use of property or expenditure of energy, and, through estate, inheritance, and gift taxes, substantial limitations are placed upon the passing of private property from one generation to another

A third phrase sometimes used to describe our economic organization is "Competitive Enterprise System" This term has two shortcomings (1) There is a relatively large volume of activities of a noncompetitive character in our economy, such as the maintenance of schools and roads, which are performed by the State, and (2) various other activities have been definitely removed from competition in larger part by government through the granting of copyrights, patents, and franchises

Still another term sometimes used to distinguish our economic organization is "American System" The difficulty of this phrase is that it is not sufficiently specific It fails to give any definite picture of the particular type of economic organization which we enjoy It could refer to a system of complete government ownership, or a corporate state, just as readily as it does to an organization in which individuals carry on the vast bulk of economic activities

*Our Prime Concern for the Individual* The phrase "American Individual Enterprise System," to some extent at least, escapes the defects of these other terms It should be recognized, nevertheless, that no mere term and no formal definition can adequately present those qualities which have made the American economic system so successful Underlying our organization are a philosophy and incentives not found in any other type of political and economic system As a people we have always

held that security comes from opportunity and competition, not from government action. We have always believed that the property which an individual creates or acquires, the goods he produces, or the services he renders, belong primarily to him, and that he has a right to exchange them as he sees fit for the goods and services of others, subject only to such laws and regulations as are enacted or accepted by the majority of his fellow citizens for the protection and enhancement of the basic ideals and objectives of the people. In a word, we have regarded the individual as supreme, and maintained that the well-being of an individual must depend upon his own wisdom and ability, not upon government paternalism.

Because of this philosophy and this incentive, we have had, throughout our history, an energizing element that has not been present to an equal degree in any nation following a different course. We have brought to bear upon each individual the hope of reward and the fear of loss. On the one side, we have made it desirable for the individual to do those things which his own nature dictates, to seek those objectives which he himself regards as worthy, and in this way to improve his own position in that segment of society in which he finds himself or desires to place himself. On the other side, and just as important a part of our philosophy, we have imposed upon the individual the responsibility of his errors—the risk of losing his prestige, or his position, or his wealth and scale of living.

1 He has by his own choice engaged in those activities which he considered most desirable as a means of (and thereby) improving his position or that of his fellow men. The result of this has been that the opportunity for such reward and improvement has been largely responsible for determining the type of activity engaged in by an individual.

2 He has been free to manage his affairs with only such governmental regulation or interference as necessary for the protection and enhancement of the basic ideals and objectives of the public.

3 He has been permitted to enjoy the fruits of his labor and activities, subject only to the limitation by the right of the community, acting through its freely chosen representatives, to determine

(a) that certain types of business, or business practices, are undesirable or need to be supervised, and

(b) that a portion of the community's aggregate income should be collected through taxes and expended for specified public purposes with a view of enhancing the general well being of the people.

4 He has been permitted complete freedom of movement from one section of the country to another and from one occupation to another.

This has meant that he has been able to take advantage of the opportunities which the country afforded and to be free of the stifling effects of geographic immobility and class stratification.

### FACTORS ESSENTIAL TO FUNCTIONING OF INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISE

In spite of this emphasis we have always placed on the rights and privileges of the individual as such, we never have had a system in which there was complete absence of governmental restraint and regulation. From the establishment of our republic we have recognized that for the individual to enjoy the freedoms and the opportunities mentioned above it has been necessary to establish and maintain certain economic principles and conditions. There has been, over the years, considerable variation in the success with which we have upheld these principles and conditions. At times, under misguided leadership, they have been seriously impaired. Taking our history as a whole, however, and looking to the future, we can see that there are four elements of outstanding importance. They are what may be termed the essential elements for the functioning of individual enterprise. These are:

1. *Hope of reward or compensation.* Without this, new economic activities will not be undertaken in a society in which citizens have a freedom of choice.

For any individual enterpriser, the hope of reward or compensation must be adequate to offset any displeasure or disinclination he may feel toward expending his time and energy on the activity in question, and to convince him that it is worth while to risk his previously accumulated wealth, or standing in the community, on the chance of bettering his position.

In the case of business, such hope is crystallized primarily in the possibilities of monetary earnings. Businessmen, before they undertake an operation, must be able to see the opportunity for not only enough income to cover the cost of raw materials, labor, and other items in the manufacturing process, but, as well, enough income to offset possible losses, to allow for "rainy days," to provide for necessary modernization and expansion of the plant, and still to have something left as earnings on the capital investment. A business which already is established may continue to operate for some time even when one or more of these conditions are not fulfilled, but if there is not the hope of at least this minimum income new businesses will not be started and new capital will not flow into established organizations.

2. *Private ownership.* Without private ownership of personal property and private ownership of the means of production, it is impossible

for individuals, over a period of time, to enjoy the full rewards of their efforts. Private property is the accumulation of the rewards and compensations for which activities were undertaken. Without the existence of private property there is little incentive for anyone to expend more energy, or time, than the amount that provision of immediate necessities requires. In other words, without the existence of private property most individuals will not work, unless by coercion, beyond the amount necessary to take care of their immediate wants. Under these conditions their output is almost certain to be disappointing, because coercion is not conducive to productive efficiency.

Closely related, and actually an inherent part of private ownership of property, is the right of bequest. Just as the ability to accumulate private property for one's own benefit constitutes a direct incentive for people to use their best abilities, so also the right to pass one's property on to others of his own choosing is an incentive to productive effort. In both cases, of course, limitations may be placed upon this right through taxation, and it may be granted that how far these limitations may go before they will seriously impair productivity is not capable of exact determination. Quite obviously, however, they can, if they go far enough, completely destroy the incentive to production that comes from the right of private ownership and the right of bequest. For the effective functioning of the enterprise system, therefore, it is essential that the restrictions and limitations be held short of this point.

3. *Contracts* Under an individual enterprise system and in any economic system where the people enjoy a scale of living above mere subsistence, a vast proportion of total production and productive activities is made possible only through the use of contracts extending over a considerable period in the future. It is for this reason—the assurance that there will continue to be adequate production to meet the needs of the people—that we have constitutional guarantees of the sanctity of contract. Without this protection of the right to make future commitments that are enforceable by law, our whole system of production would collapse.

4. *Competition* Competition frequently is thought of as referring almost exclusively to business operations. Actually, as an element of the American Individual Enterprise System, competition has a much broader meaning than this. For the efficient functioning of our economic organization, it is necessary not only that there shall be competition in the production and distribution of goods and services by business organizations, but also that there shall be freedom on the part of individuals to compete with other individuals in the use of their abilities and services, and in the terms on which they offer their abilities and services to others.

It has been this competition between individuals—this freedom of the

individual to select that type of endeavor or those objectives which seem important to him and offer the greatest reward in service, money, power, or prestige—which more than anything else has kept this nation from becoming stratified into rigid noncompeting classes. As a result of this element in our economic system there has been a constant bringing of new persons into those levels of work requiring specialized skill, and this, in combination with the unusual ability of our people and the protection our constitutional system affords, is largely responsible for the relative freedom from dry rot which our economic system has enjoyed and for the incredible speed with which we have developed as a nation. The elimination of such competition between individuals would mean the loss of these advantages, the freezing of our people into a given economic status with no choice of bettering their position, and a material slowing down, if not virtually complete cessation, of our progress.

Competition among business firms is equally essential. Here it consists of the efforts by many organizations of individuals to get public acceptance for their respective products or services. Sometimes this acceptance is based on price, sometimes upon quality or service in relation to price. From the point of view of the public, both mean the same thing. In both instances buyers express their independent judgment on how to obtain the greatest value for their money in quantity, quality, style, convenience, or otherwise.

In certain fields, it is true, such as in the provision of telephone service, competition is wasteful. In these cases society may be better served by the elimination of competition between companies and the substitution thereof of a single organization under able governmental regulation. The fact should be kept in mind, however, that this substitution does not guarantee efficient operation. A monopoly, whether private or governmental, tends to be, and frequently is, wasteful. Furthermore, because of the absence of competing firms in these cases, it is difficult to measure the degree of waste and to protect ourselves from it. In other words, even in some fields where society decides it is best to have either regulated private monopoly or outright government operation, the cost may be far in excess of what would be necessary under individual enterprise spurred to maximum efficiency through competition.

These exceptions to the general principle of our reliance upon competition constitute only a small part of the individual enterprise system. And they are not to any degree inconsistent with the general view held by the American public that, in the vast bulk of activities having to do with the production and distribution of goods and services, competition is a much more effective policeman than government supervision and regulation. For this reason we have continued to rely, wherever possible, upon

competition as the best means to increase efficiency and maximize production and employment, and we have considered it the proper function of government merely to fix fair rules and enforce them without discrimination. In a word, it has been the conviction of the American public, and history has supported the conviction, that competition is the best possible guarantee for the development of the most efficient units, for having goods offered at the lowest possible prices, and for assuring the greatest benefit at the least cost for everyone concerned.

### CHANGES IN GOVERNMENT CONTROLS OF ENTERPRISE

In the course of our development there necessarily has been an extensive change in the degree of government control to which our economic organization has been subjected. At no time in our history was it a "free system" in the sense that it was possible for individuals to consider their own acts without reference to others. From the beginning of the nation there has been some restriction and, as the population has grown, as industrial processes have become more complex, and as our markets have broadened, one after another of our activities has been brought under closer legal supervision for the presumed purpose of protecting and enhancing the general welfare.

The record of this expanding governmental regulation is well known. At the time of the formation of our union our population was so small, our natural resources were so great, and our methods of doing business were so simple that, with the exception of granting copyrights and patents, such regulation of business as was needed could be left almost entirely to the local and state governments. This regulation varied somewhat from state to state, but generally, it is accurate to say, it did not retard to any appreciable degree the production and distribution of goods. In fact, getting rid of regulations which needlessly restricted the prosperity of the country was one of the primary reasons for our breaking away from the British Empire and forming our own republic. For almost a century thereafter public opinion refused to support legislation limiting the lines of activity in which private individuals might engage and the conditions under which they might work.

The only major exceptions to this general attitude on the part of our people have been those instances in which it appeared evident that public interest would be better served by granting a monopoly, as in the case of some utilities, and those activities in which some government regulation obviously was desirable for the protection of the public. Banking is perhaps the best example of the latter. But even in banking, except for the First and Second Banks of the United States, regulation was left to the states until the passage of the National Bank Act in 1863. In transpor-



tation the states remained the sole regulatory agency until the adoption of the Interstate Commerce Act in 1887. For business in general the first federal regulation of particular importance was the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890. On labor all legislation, with one or two exceptions, up until the past few years, was by state governments. And for the protection of the consumer the states were almost entirely responsible until the Pure Food and Drugs Act was enacted in 1906. So it has gone decade after decade, with our citizens supporting the general thesis that there should be no more regulation than necessary, but at the same time always getting ready to approve action by government, either state or federal, in establishing restrictions and regulations wherever and whenever it became evident that only in this way could the public interest be adequately protected.

In this record of regulation down through our history, there has been, as viewed by the public, and regardless of various arguments to the contrary, one guiding principle. This is that the purpose of the regulation was not to curtail needlessly the freedom of the individual by freezing harmful and unnecessary rigidities into the system. This is shown by the fact that when the public has found that there was needless restriction it has reversed the action and repealed the statute. In other words, the public has not regarded regulation as establishing a principle of government management of private enterprise. For example, having the government step into such fields as road building, schools, the post office, and in some instances public utilities, has been in the hope that such centralized direction and control would confer greater benefits than were being obtained under private ownership. They have been examples of attempts to increase the nonmonetary income of the American public, rather than attempts to undermine the driving motivation that comes from a system of individual enterprise.

#### AMERICAN SYSTEM CONTRASTED WITH COMMUNISM AND FASCISM

In summary, then, it is evident, that both in philosophical concept and in practical operation the American Individual Enterprise System stands in the sharpest possible contrast with the dictatorship of communism, on the one hand, or the dictatorship of a corporate state, or fascism, or nazism, on the other hand. Under these systems the individual is reduced to the position of almost complete impotence in the handling of his own affairs. In communism the State owns all productive facilities used for 'social production,' and a small group makes all decisions as to production and distribution. Through the control of these activities, in combination with equally complete control of wages and prices, the State, or this small group, has the final and absolute say as to what and

how much the individual may consume. In the corporate state, whether under fascism or nazism, ownership of property remains in private hands in large measure but its use is regulated in the utmost detail by the State. In practice, therefore, insofar as freedom of the individual is concerned, we find the same situation under this system that we do under communism. Furthermore, under the corporate state complete centralization is necessary for its operation. The political aspect of this is absolute dictatorship, with the individual reduced to the status of a State slave.

In other words, both fascism and communism proceed on the principle that the State should be the only vehicle for social organization, that the lines of social relationship should run from individual to the State, not from individual to other groupings, that the church, labor union, corporation, school, and cultural society should be arms of the State, and that the individual lives to serve the State rather than the other way around.

### BOUNDARIES OF STATE CONTROL

Because the State can make its rule binding on everyone, and because it has power of ultimate enforcement, it is well fitted to preserve order, protect the citizenry from foreign oppression, maintain a contractual system which makes complex dealings between individuals possible, ensure universal validity of weights and measures, lay down rules for public health. The State also is well fitted to conserve natural resources in the interest of the whole population, to check monopolistic practices and monopolistic concentrations of private power, and to establish and enforce fair rules of competition. Probably, too, the State is the best guarantor of mass education which provides a way for discovery and social utilization of the capacities of individuals.

But the sociological characteristics that make the State the logical vehicle for achieving certain social ends limit its functions for gaining other ends. The State, for example, rules by blanket authority. If the law were not one for all men, if exceptions were made for individual cases, then the officers of government would become tyrants and faith in the State would wane. But in ruling by blanket authority the State is unable to make the local social adjustments that are needed to satisfy local needs. In communities as close as 20 miles, wage scales, working conditions, and living habits may vary significantly. The blanket rules of the State can fit these conditions only crudely and in terms of maxima and minima. It remains for individuals and groups of individuals to establish the myriad of relationships that take proper and satisfactory account of these differences.

Since the State influences and affects every person in the community,

it has no right to take the risks that other organizations can take. If a company stakes its all on a process or a product and fails, only its managers, workers, and stockholders suffer. The public is likely to continue being served by its competitors and will have no loss to bear. But if the State dominates a market and fails on a process or product, the whole community suffers. There may be no other producer to provide the goods and the whole loss falls on the community, not just upon those directly concerned with and responsible for the failure. For this reason the State is less well equipped to do experimental work than organizations with restricted and specialized responsibilities.

The State, since it relies ultimately on the principle of force for its sanctions, is also ill equipped to organize the more intimate and personal interests that require spontaneous and variable expression. It is well equipped to enforce conformity with moral concepts, but not to control personal habits, religious creeds, etc. Neither is the State equipped to control opinion, for men will continue to seek the truth even when the obstacle of force is put in their way.

Thus the State, like other associations, has distinct capacities and limitations as an organizer of society. When it stays within its proper realm, it serves an indispensable function, but when it invades the sphere of other associations, it affords poor service to the community.

In the United States this limited function of the State has been recognized by the public from the time of the foundation of our republic. We have never regarded the State as our master, but always as our servant. The concept of the position of the individual which is found in the philosophy and practice of communism and fascism has been contrary to the virtually unanimous opinion of the American public. We have been a people dedicated to the theory of equal opportunity. It has been our conviction that everyone should receive an education at public expense, that he should be free to enter the occupation of his own choosing, that no one should have the right to deny to another the freedom of selecting his own occupation, that competition is the best device for assuring maximum production, that monopoly is undesirable except in those cases where it clearly will confer a direct public benefit, and that it is the function of government to establish the rules by which we carry on our economic activities and to resist all tendencies in the direction of monopoly.

Our system is based upon the thesis that the individual is an entity in and of himself and in the aggregate is all powerful. It assumes that the government has the right to exercise only such powers as we see fit in the aggregate to confer upon it. And for the system to work successfully we must be ever conscious that those individuals upon whom we confer the power of government cannot be considered either more wise or more able

than other individuals who are merely a part of the general population. In brief, constitutional government, the Bill of Rights, opportunity, the right to enjoy the fruits of one's labor, and freedom from unnecessary restraint and hindrance in the pursuit of our individual and collective welfare—these are the tenets which for over 150 years have guided the American Individual Enterprise System and have enabled it to confer more benefits upon its members than any other economic system in human history.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 How is the term "economic system" defined in this essay?
- 2 Why is (or is not) the American Individual Enterprise System a better descriptive term than others that have been used for our economic system?
- 3 What are some of the implications of the emphasis on the individual which is an important element in the American economic system?
- 4 Name the four essential principles which according to the article, underlie our economic system and explain their importance.
- 5 For what purposes and under what conditions have government controls been established to limit free enterprise?
- 6 In what areas of our social life is government control desirable, and in what areas should free enterprise operate?
- 7 This essay is a form of abstract theoretical persuasion. Can you provide specific illustrations to support or refute its major points?
- 8 What are some of the disadvantages of the system which this essay omits?
- 9 Examine our education system in the light of the theory of this essay.

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Do you think that this essay paints too rosy a picture of our economic system?
- 2 What is the place of labor unions in the American Individual Enterprise System?
- 3 Are there areas of American life today in which government controls should be set up or in which they should be removed?
- 4 Does our emphasis on individualism make cooperative enterprises difficult in the United States?
- 5 Is competition an incentive to everyone?
- 6 Would the individual freedom characteristic of the United States be desirable for all people?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Freedom implies responsibilities.
- 2 The contribution of government to economic well being.
- 3 Not everyone works for profit.
- 4 Cooperation is sometimes more desirable than competition.

## PETER F. DRUCKER

born 1909 Professor of Management in the Graduate School of Business Administration of New York University is an economist and management consultant. He has written many articles on economic matters as well as two books: *The Future of Economic Man* and *The Concept of the Corporation* [ *Revolution by Mass Production* from *Harper's Magazine*, September, 1954, reprinted by permission of the author ]

### *Revolution by Mass Production*

#### I

The world revolution of our time is not communism, fascism, the new nationalism of the non-Western peoples, or any of the other "isms" that appear in the headlines, they are reactions to the basic disturbance, secondary rather than primary. The true world revolution is "made in U.S.A.," and its principle is the mass-production principle. Nothing ever before recorded in the history of man equals in speed, universality, and impact the transformation that modern industrial organization has wrought in the foundations of society in the forty years since Henry Ford developed the mass-production principle to turn out the Model T.

Though "made in Detroit," the impact of the new principle is neither confined to the United States nor to the old industrial territory of the West. Indeed, the impact is greatest on pre-industrial civilizations. Mass-production technology undermines and explodes those societies which have no resistance to the new forces, no background of industrial life to cushion the shock. In China, the mass-production principle, swept into the hinterland from the coastal cities by the forced migration of industries during the Japanese invasion, is destroying the world's oldest and hitherto most stable institution—the Chinese family. In India, industrialization has begun to corrode the Hindu caste system—ritual restrictions on proximity and intercourse between castes simply cannot be maintained under factory conditions. Russia uses the new mass-production principles to try again where Byzantium failed, to mate Europa and the Bull, the technological fruits of Western thought and Oriental despotism, to produce a new world order which will claim to be the legitimate heir to both West and East. In our own country, the region hitherto least touched by industrialization, the rural Old South, is speedily being "tractored off." Indeed, conversion of the Southern farm into a rural assembly line seems

about to "solve" the Southern race problem in a manner never dreamed of by either Southern liberal or Southern reactionary—by pushing the Negro off the land and directly into the industrial cities of the North

At the time of World War I, only one generation ago, industry was by and large still confined to a narrow belt on either side of the North Atlantic, the only exception, the only successful transplantation of the machine to new soil, was Japan. The representative unit of industry, even in the most heavily industrialized countries, was the family owned or family managed, medium size factory employing fewer than five hundred workers and differing from the workshop of pre industrial days mainly in its use of mechanical power. Today the situation is reversed. The areas not undergoing rapid industrialization are few and isolated, and the representative, the decisive, industrial unit is the large, mass production plant, managed by professionals without ownership-stake, employing thousands of people, and organized on entirely different technological, social, and economic principles—so different indeed that in retrospect, the typical factory of 1910 seems to have been closer to its great grandfather, the artisan's workshop of pre steam engine days, than to its own son—the modern mass production plant.

The geographic spread of the mass production principle, its sweep in width, is accompanied by a sweep in depth—the penetration of the traditional pre industrial and non industrial occupations. A generation ago the great bulk of productive work, even in the most highly industrialized country, was done in forms antedating modern industry by hundreds if not thousands of years and completely unindustrial in character. The mass production principle was still regarded as a mere technique, consisting in the application of some such gadget as the assembly line, and largely confined to the automobile industry.

The war showed that the basic principle which underlay Henry Ford's first plant forty years ago was completely independent of specific tools or techniques and could be applied to the organization of all manufacturing activities. Today it has become abundantly clear that the mass production principle is not confined to manufacturing but is a *general principle of human organization for joint work*.

The Russian collective farm was the first application of the principle to agriculture. Its labor organization, which uses the individual as a highly specialized tool performing one essentially simple if not unskilled, job repetitiously, its control through the state owned tractor station, its system of compensation—all are applications of mass production technology. Yet the Russian collective farm is already as obsolete technologically as an automobile plant of forty years ago. The fully mechanized cotton plantation in the Mississippi Delta or the vegetable co-operative on the

irrigated land of California's Central Valley has gone much further in breaking with the pre-industrial traditions of agriculture. And in their ground nuts (peanuts) scheme for tropical Africa the British propose to reorganize a whole colonial empire on the mass-production basis.

Without using an assembly line or a conveyor belt, clerical operations in large-scale business enterprises are today increasingly organized in exactly the same way Henry Ford organized the production of the Model T. The typists' pool of a large insurance company, check-sorting and check-clearing operations in a big bank, the sorting and filing of orders in a mail-order house, and thousands of other operations in business and government offices do not differ in nature from the automobile assembly line, however much they may differ in appearance.

Similarly, scientific research has been organized on mass-production lines, not only in industry but in medicine and biology. In the new Sloan-Kettering center for cancer research in New York—significantly founded by two of the pioneers of the automobile industry—the concepts and methods of work are those of the industrial plant. During the war the application of this mass-production principle to scientific research resulted in the atomic bomb. Even pure research, unconcerned with application, has been set up on the mass-production pattern in some of the big laboratories like Bell Telephone or General Electric.

The principle has even been applied successfully to work that had always been considered essentially personal in character. The efficiency of the Mayo Clinic, for instance, rests largely on managing diagnosis and examination as a production line. And even Henry Luce's "group journalism," by means of which *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune* go to press, is similar to assembly-line work.

## 2

Mass production has been as imperfectly understood by its partisans as by critics—all of whom have seen it as a new "technology." From Henry Ford himself, whose fondness for his invention is expressed in the title of an article he wrote in 1928, "Machinery, the New Messiah," to Lenin, Ford's great admirer in the early twenties (communism, in Lenin's slogan, is "socialism plus electrification"), the apostles of mass production thought of it as a technique, a new arrangement of physical forces. The opponents of mass production saw it in an equally false way, though their feeling about it was despair, not hope. Technology was the villain in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, in Karel Capek's play which gave us the word *robot*, "R.U.R.," and in Charlie Chaplin's motion picture, "Modern Times." In all of these, what was odious was the subordi-

nation of man to the machine. The Technocrats of the early thirties were playing with the same misconception.

But when we analyze this new so-called technology, we find that it is not a "technology" at all, it is not merely an arrangement of physical forces. What it is really is a new concept of organizing men for joint work. It is a principle of social order rather than one of mechanics. This was true of Ford's work. He made not one single mechanical invention or discovery, everything mechanical he used was old and well known. Only his concept of human organization for work was new. This social principle is increasingly applied without any of Ford's machines, indeed without any machines or technology at all.

The essential new concepts of mass production are "specialization" and "integration." Both refer to the relationships between men working together. At first sight, these may appear to be very old and familiar principles. "Specialization" seems to be nothing but the familiar "division of labor" on which all human activity beyond the most primitive rests. Equally, any productive effort which depends on the work of more than one person—which means any productive effort at all, with the possible exception of the work of the artist—may seem to depend on "integration."

As used to describe the social order of the new industrial system, however, both terms undergo a radical change of meaning. Traditionally, "specialization" meant confinement to one product. The shoemaker stuck to his last, the cabinet-maker turned out furniture and left structure woodwork to the carpenter. The classical example for the international division of labor, the example which the free-trade theorists used again and again to show its benefits, was the specialization of Portugal with its warm and dry climate on producing wines, while cold and rainy England specialized in the production of wool. The traditional division of labor focuses on the product: an activity is specialized if it confines itself to turning out the one product which an individual or a country is best equipped to produce.

But in the organization of work on the mass-production principle the unit of individual work is not the product. There is nobody who either turns out a complete product or is capable of turning one out. The unit of work is one operation, if not one motion, repeated endlessly. The product is the result of thousands of such operations, only the plant as a whole can turn out a product.

What this means socially we can see at once if we try to project this new concept in symbolic terms. One of the oldest and most universal symbols of the fulfilled life has been the hermit turning out shoes or tending his beehives—in other words, the man who completely devotes



himself to a "specialized activity" in the old style. But nothing could be further from being a symbol of the fulfilled life than a hermit tending a punch press or forever putting rear bumpers on imaginary cars, all by himself in the wilderness.

The difference between the old specialization and the new is a matter of skill. In the first place, the "elimination of skill" in mass production is more a myth than a reality, totally unskilled labor plays a very small part in any industry. Hundreds of operations in the modern plant require individual skill fully equal to that of the master craftsmen in the medieval guilds. The traditional system had a multitude of totally unskilled operators, there is little skill required for weeding or for pushing a wheelbarrow. But the old operations, however unskilled, were always directly related to the product. The hired man, for example, not only pulled weeds, he helped the farmer bring in the hay. In the new specialization, however, no one person turns out the product, everybody is confined to operations or motions.

Precisely because nobody in the social order of modern industry makes a product, "integration" also assumes a new meaning. A product can only be made if the operations and motions of a great many individuals are put together and integrated into a pattern. It is this pattern that is actually productive, not the individual. Hence modern industry requires planning more precise and farsighted than anything we have ever witnessed. From Ford's River Rouge plant and the Russian five-year plans, to the preparations for D-Day in Europe, the principles of co-ordination and synchronization of action have organized greater masses of men to accomplish operations of ever increasing complexity.

In addition, much more new skill is required for integration than has been eliminated by specialization, and the new skill is not manual, it is not knowledge of tools or of materials. It is partly technical and theoretical knowledge of principles and processes. Partly it is social skill in the organization of men for work in an integrated group. Above all, the new "skill" required is the ability to see, to understand, and even to produce a pattern, and that is by definition imaginative ability of a high, almost of an artistic, order.

One example which shows this clearly is the story of the difficulties encountered during the recent war with the production of a carrier based plane for the Navy. When Pearl Harbor came, there existed only one tested model suitable for warfare in the Pacific, yet only a dozen or so had actually been made—and by a small firm of airplane designers who had built the planes one by one, almost by hand. At once the Navy needed not dozens but thousands of these planes. Not only were the original designers quite incapable of producing in such quantities, they did not even

have the blueprints needed for mass production. One of the large companies took over, hastily converted some of its best plants, put its best engineers, mechanics, and skilled workers to work. Yet not one plane could actually be turned out until the theoretical work had been completed: the analysis of the plane, its breakdown into the component parts, the breakdown of each part into sub-assemblies, the breakdown of the sub-assemblies into individual operations and motions, and the reintegration of operations into sub-assemblies, sub-assemblies into parts, parts into the plane. It was work entirely done on paper—with some hundred tons of blueprints as the final yield—and it was done *entirely on the basis of general principles*. Airplane experts proved of no value whatsoever, and the actual job had to be done by men who had never worked on plane production before. It was also a long job, taking a full year during which nothing was produced. But once this theoretical job was done, the plant went almost immediately into full production, five weeks after the last blueprint had been made, the plant operated at its full production rate of six thousand planes a year.

### 3

The winning of the war was a triumph of mass production surpassing any other mobilization of human effort which the world had seen. But, in a sense, the war was only an incident in the social revolution of our times. The new principle of mass production corrodes and undermines the very basis of traditional society. It substitutes organization for the individual as the productive unit and thus, in separating the worker from the product, it makes the threat of unemployment intolerable, it separates the family from society, it introduces new social classes, it imposes tasks upon government far beyond the capacity of traditional government and so gives new weapons to the tyrant. In this article I shall focus attention upon the social impact of the mass production principle.

The divorce of the worker from the product is the most visibly shattering effect of the mass production revolution in Western society. The worker no longer produces: even in the plant, he works. The individual by himself is not only incapable of turning out the product, he is incapable, by and large, of defining his own contribution to the productive organization. If it is the organization which produces rather than the worker, social status, social prestige and social power cannot attach to the individual's work. They can attach only to the *job*—that is, they can flow only from his membership, status, prestige, and power within the organization and thus within society.

This is shown clearly in those cases where the worker actually controls

the means of production. Traditionally, a skilled tool-maker owns his own tool box, which may represent an investment of thousands of dollars. He is in complete control of this tool box, he can pick it up and take it away with him any time he wants. And yet he is incapable of producing, even though he apparently "owns" the means of production. Unless he finds employment in the plant, unless he is given access to the organization, he cannot become productive himself. His tool box gives him prestige, it gives him an asset, an item of property on which he could even obtain a loan. But in the modern industrial system, control of the "means of production" does not give ability to produce, no more than does the worker's possession of a skilled hand, or of an automobile.

This applies in all fields to which the mass-production principle has been applied. The most striking examples are indeed to be found outside of manufacturing. There are apparently no "means of production" in a clerical operation, but cut off from the organization a bookkeeper, a comptometer operator, or a shipping clerk is completely helpless and unproductive. Similarly an engineer or an industrial chemist is not productive unless integrated in the project or laboratory, no matter how highly trained he may be. In an industrial society, only a very small minority can produce at all by themselves—the artists and the professional men. All the others, provided the social reorganization has been complete, are dependent upon access to a plant, an office, a laboratory—that is, the industrial organism—to be productive and to achieve status in society.

The divorce of worker and product explains the central importance which depression and unemployment have attained in our industrialized system. It is not primarily the economic impact which makes unemployment the nightmare it has become for every industrialized country. In the United States, we were able during the Depression of the thirties to keep the great majority of the population, including the great majority of the chronically unemployed and their families, on an economic level well above physical subsistence in most cases and probably above the level on which most people had lived a half century before. We managed to do this in spite of an almost complete absence of planning in the first chaotic years of the Great Depression. Yet it is in this country that the Depression had the most profound psychological, social, and political effects, and that unemployment has become the major nightmare. This is simply another way of saying that the United States today is the most industrialized country, both in respect to the importance of manufacturing in our economy and in respect to the extension of the industrial principle beyond manufacturing proper.

The main effect of unemployment is social and psychological. In effect, the unemployed man becomes a non-producer, an outcast who has been

refused participation and membership in society. Long term unemployment means loss of self respect, loss of initiative, and finally, in extreme cases, loss of sanity. It is no accident that the "Depression-shock" was by no means confined to those who actually suffered lengthy unemployment but hit fully as hard the men who never were out of a job and who may never have been in real danger of losing their jobs. They lived for a decade in the constant fear of being cut off from access to productivity on the next pay day, it may well have been less of a psychological disturbance to become actually unemployed than to go on living in the constant fear of being fired.

Precisely because the industrial system permanently divorces man and production—a divorce which cannot be overcome whatever the legal or political constitution of the society—prevention of depression and chronic unemployment has become an absolute necessity for any industrialized country. Only if the citizen can be reasonably certain that he will not be cast out from society and deprived of his effective citizenship by forces which he can neither control nor understand, can modern industrial society expect to be acceptable, to be rational, to be meaningful to its members. Otherwise it must become insane and demon-ridden.

The divorce of man from production thus makes impossible reliance on "natural adjustment." The patient may have a better chance of fast economic recovery if left alone, but he is likely to die of social shock and exposure just when he should be ready for recovery.

#### 4

Outside the old industrial territory of the North Atlantic community, the most profoundly revolutionary effect of the industrial world revolution is its impact on the one institution on which all others are founded—the family. The family as a biological unit has always and everywhere been the center of emotional cohesion. It has also been the unit of production. With but few exceptions man and wife have been a necessary partnership biologically, psychologically and socially, and with but few exceptions children have always been integrated as much into the social as into the psychological unit. Once out of their infancy, they were as much members, though junior members, of the productive unit as they were, by their birth, members of the emotional and ritual communion.

In the most primitive civilizations, those of the hunter and fisher, the wife gathers root crops, berries and small game while the husband goes on his hunting expeditions, the children help the mother until the sons are old enough to accompany their father. In an agricultural society the cohesion of the biological, emotional, and productive family unit is even

stronger—perhaps the major reason for the amazing strength and resistance of the family-farm society. The craftsman and artisan of the highly developed civilizations also depends upon his wife, who presides over the store and over the house, who looks after the journeymen and apprentices as well as after the customers, the children are junior members of the unit, sharing in the life and the work of the family as apprentices or at least as close observers of the family work.

Industrialization destroys this unit and divorces the family from society. The place of business is separate from the place of residence: the father goes to work in the plant or in the office, miles away from the home. Wife and children are no longer integrated into the productive work. They may, indeed, have their own jobs and go to work themselves, but even if they work in the same plant or the same office as the man of the family they do not work as a family unit.

This was graphically shown one hundred years ago in the early days of the industrial system. Child labor, the horrors of which were uncovered by the Royal Commissions investigating the English cotton industry of the early nineteenth century, was considered a by-product of industrialization. Yet when children of five were employed in cotton mills to card or spin they did not really do any work; children of that age had not always done. The horror and degradation did not lie in its being children's work but in its being work in the factory. When transferred from the weaver's home to the factory, the work was no longer the same work. Those children worked, indeed, next to their mothers. But they did not work as children within the family. They worked *next to* but not *with* their mothers, and they worked as stunted adults rather than as children.

In any traditional society the mother of adolescent children is the very symbol of strength, fulfillment, and social power. In an industrial society the mother of adolescent children is likely to be a problem to herself and to society, even if she has something better to do with her time than to play bridge. In a pre-industrial society the problem of the "equality of woman" hardly exists. The man may appear to hold the power legally and ritually, but outside of a very small ruling class relieved of the necessity to work for its living the mother holds the power socially. Economically man and wife are necessarily equals because production is a joint effort. In an industrial society, however, the wife and mother may be outside production, outside society.

The family is still as necessary as ever as a biological and especially as an emotional unit. In fact, its very divorce from society makes it even more essential emotionally and leads to a glorification of motherhood, of children, of the family tie so extreme as to betray the increasing tension—especially as this emotional affirmation goes hand in hand with an increas-

ing willingness to dissolve family ties in divorce. On the one hand the family has become a luxury, children are no longer an economic asset but an economic liability. It is no accident that industrialization and a decline in the birth rate run parallel. At the same time, the emotional unit becomes increasingly precious, disturbances of the emotional cohesion which in traditional societies are not much more than minor nuisances become severe crises and the cause of maladjustments and neuroses destructive alike to individual and family life.

The pre-industrial, non-Western societies have no resistance whatever against this attack on the traditional family, their cultural cohesion collapses under it as under a new plague. But even in the West, where the weakening of the family has been a very gradual process, the divorce of family and society has had profound effects. It is this divorce which gives our industrial cities their oppressive look, the look of a built up jungle. This has nothing to do with poverty. Indeed, the brand new car that stands outside so many of the neat five room bungalows in Detroit's working-class districts, or the new refrigerator or washing machine, only adds to the bleakness. That the home and the family are no longer the focal points of social life is the reason for the look of furtiveness and impermanence, and for the undertow of violence, lawlessness, and formlessness beneath the surface gentility which characterize our industrial cities, and which contrast so strikingly with the beauty, the order, and the clear strong rhythm of the new industrial plant.

The mass production principle has further altered the configuration of society by introducing two new classes—the new ruling group of executives and union leaders—and the new middle class. Neither existed sixty or seventy years ago. It is the new middle class which may turn out to be the decisive social development of our era. In the first place, this group has been growing the most rapidly and will continue to grow rapidly. In the United States, for instance, the employed middle class accounted for less than 10 per cent in the census of 1880. By 1940 it had risen to more than 25 per cent, and it is likely to account for almost one-third of the population in the 1950 census. In absolute numbers this means a rise from five to forty five or fifty million men and their families in seventy years.

By contrast with these new groups, all the older classes have lost ground. The mass production revolution has completed the destruction of the power of the land-owning aristocracy of the *ancien régime* which began two hundred years ago. But it has also dethroned the ruling groups of bourgeois society—the merchant, the banker, the capitalist. Symbolic of this change is the slow but steady decay of the great merchant oligarchies—the "City" in London, "Wall Street" in New York, "State

Street" in Boston. Where only twenty years ago the bright graduate of the Harvard Business School aimed at a job with a New York Stock Exchange house, he now seeks employment with a steel, oil, or automobile company. It is not only that money has become less important than industrial capacity to produce, the old financial powers have also lost control over money and credit itself, as witness the shift of the financial headquarters from Wall Street to the government agencies in Washington and from the City to the British Treasury.

Equally, the old middle class has lost in importance—though much less than the old ruling groups. Seventy years ago this pre-industrial middle class of independent small business men, independent professionals, and family farmers was practically the only middle class in existence. It offered the main, if not the only, channel for social advancement. It alone represented the "sturdy yeomanry" which any society needs to make bearable the tension between the independent rich and the dependent poor. It has not declined in absolute numbers, but it has sharply declined in proportionate importance—from 37 per cent of the American population in 1880 to 18 per cent in 1940, with the downward trend accelerated since.

The most important phenomenon in the long run, however, is probably that the industrial working class—the first child of the Industrial Revolution—has apparently passed its peak both in absolute numbers and in its proportionate weight. In this country it accounted in 1940 for roughly the same percentage of the population as it did seventy years ago—just about half. All indications are that the figure will decline in the future—if the decline has not already begun. In all the new industries (for example, petroleum, chemistry, or plastics) the ratio of manual workers is much smaller, that of the industrial middle class much higher, than in the older industries. To the extent to which the older industries modernize themselves (for example, the glass industry)—and the process is running along at high speed—they will employ proportionately fewer wage-earners and more salaried middle-class men.

Also, within the working class a new shift from unskilled to highly skilled labor has begun—reversing the trend of the past fifty years. The unskilled worker is actually an engineering imperfection. By definition unskilled work can be done better, faster, and cheaper by machine. But the more the unskilled man is replaced by mechanical tools, the more men are needed to design these tools, to build them, to arrange them for production, to service them, and to repair them. The new skills are not manual skills, however, though their practitioner may be called a mechanic. They are basically intellectual skills: knowledge of production engineering, draftsmanship, shop-mathematics, metallurgy, account-

ing, statistics, etc. In other words, an increasing proportion of the working class is being converted into the new industrial middle class into a new bourgeoisie.

The new middle class emerges qualitatively, if not yet quantitatively, decisive for the new industrial society. Certainly it is the allegiance of this class that will determine what kind of political system a mass production society will adopt. The new middle class is as dependent on its jobs and on access to the organization as are the workers. At the same time it does not 'do the work' but establishes the pattern, it is the carrier of this social integration. It is a working class in its economic status, it is a managerial class in its function. The determination of the social status of this class, with its ambiguous position, is one of the major decisions facing industrial society, to enable the members of this class to see the whole is one of the major problems of the industrial enterprise. On its solution depends to no small extent the solution of the problem of citizenship in industrial society, and with it both the social cohesion and the economic efficiency of the industrial order.

The disillusioned Soviet wit who said twenty five years ago that the inevitable development of history was not toward the victory of the proletariat but toward the victory of the secretariat spoke prophetically. This is the new class whose members have yet to see the whole of which their work is a part. Their blinders are a menace to the functioning of modern industrial society, and for their enlightenment we have only the feeble devices of publicity or that magic abracadabra of modern management, the organizational chart. Actually this middle class of technicians is the offspring of the mass production principle: they are not orphans but the true inheritors of a revolution which they scarcely recognize much less understand.

## 5

The big industrial enterprise is the representative institution of the mass-production society. In the first place it determines the individual's view of his society. A man employed in a small shop—even a man employed in the corner cigar store apparently far removed from the world of the big enterprise, still judges society by the extent to which its basic promises and beliefs are fulfilled in the big enterprise. He does not consider his own store typical; he considers U.S. Steel typical. His own relations with his employer may be excellent; for instance, yet he will consider labor relations to be poor and the worker to be exploited if the relations between the big enterprise and its workers are unsatisfactory.

He will consider that his society gives a high standard of living if the employee of the big enterprise enjoys a high standard. He will consider



that his society fulfills its promise of equal opportunities if the big enterprise gives adequate chance for advancement

But the big enterprise is also representative in another way. It actually symbolizes the new organizing principle of an industrial society in the purest and clearest form, just as the perfect crystal in a mineralogical museum presents in perfect form the organizing principle which the mineral always tends to follow in whatever shape it is found.

As an example, let me use the state in which I live, Vermont—thinly settled, poor, without even a sizeable city. There is no large-scale industry. Nine out of ten factories have fewer than fifty employees, companies employing more than a thousand men can be counted on your fingers. Much of the industry—especially wood working, which is the biggest employer—is also marginal, producing goods for which there is not enough of a market to attract any of the big manufacturers. In this state a determined effort is being made, through a state founded and industry-supported Bureau of Industrial Research, to introduce into the very small units of our industry the production and marketing methods, and the principles of organization, of the big enterprises. The Bureau has successfully organized the elements of a “production line” in a wood-working shop of five employees, and it has applied time motion studies, scientific plant layout, and assembly line techniques to a furniture plant employing forty men. Even this rudimentary use yielded very substantial results. It increased output per worker by a fifth, and cut costs and waste in about the same proportion. In other words, the efficiency and productivity of the small business and its ability to survive improve directly in proportion to its ability to make of itself a large enterprise in miniature.

Perhaps an even better illustration of the representative nature of big enterprises is the development of the family farm. The Vermont farmer, with his small property, his poor, rocky soil, and his very short growing season, has been specializing in dairy farming ever since the refrigerated railroad car made possible long-distance transportation of milk and milk products. But during the past twenty five years the character of his specialization has been changing profoundly. Where before he specialized in a product, he can now—with little exaggeration—be said to specialize in one process. He no longer grows his own fodder. In many cases he no longer raises his own calves. He feeds fodder grown in the Midwest and South to cows bought from a breeder. He also no longer processes the milk. He delivers the raw milk to a creamery which processes it and delivers it to a distributor. The distribution of this apparently so simple product requires actually one of the most complicated organizations in our entire economy—and one based on such mass production principles as the breakdown of the operation into simple component operations, the

synchronization of the flow of materials and sub assemblies, and the interchangeability of component parts

The farmer does not even make his own butter, the butter he buys comes from Wisconsin or Iowa, fifteen hundred miles away. Sometimes it is not even economical for the farmer to keep his own milk for his own consumption but cheaper to buy his supply in the store. Outwardly little seems to have changed, but actually the Vermont dairy farmer—or the Iowa corn-hog farmer, the Minnesota wheat farmer, the citrus grower in California—has become a link in an agricultural assembly line. It would be difficult to say who his "management" is or where it is, but he is surely being managed. His processes, his policies, very largely even his actual operations are laid out for him by the machinery over which he has very little control. The only positive action left for him is to go on a "milk strike"—the very term is significant. The farmer's relationship to the economy and to society has become increasingly remote as well as increasingly complex. Almost as much as the man on the automobile assembly line he needs to understand what he is doing and why, and it is almost as hard for him to obtain a view of the whole as it is for an accountant in Washington.

The big enterprise is the true symbol of our social order. It is the symbol in the sense that its internal order and its internal problems are considered the characteristic order and the pressing problems of an industrial society even by those who are not, apparently, affected by them directly. It is the symbol also in the other meaning of the term. It is the place where the real and the effective principles of our social order become both visible and tangible. In the industrial enterprise the structure which actually underlies all our society can be seen, elsewhere it can only be felt. Above all, in the industrial enterprise alone can the problem of our industrial society be grasped and therefore be tackled.

The development of the new institutions of a functioning and free industrial society is the most urgent task facing the West today. It is pre-eminently the responsibility of the United States. In the first place, ours is the most highly developed industrial country. Our wealth and productivity make it possible for us to work on problems which in other countries have become so inflamed by class war, poverty, and tension as to be far too sore to touch. On the other hand, we are perhaps in a more critical situation than any other country, precisely because ours is such a highly developed industrial system. Indeed, all evidence indicates that we have only a very few years—perhaps a decade, perhaps a quarter century, certainly no more—to tackle it successfully.

As the originator and prime mover of the mass production revolution, this country has become the greatest power and has risen to world leader-

ship So far, however, this leadership has been confined to the new technology We have no social and political institutions, not even an economic policy, to go with the technology But precisely because this mass production technology is a corrosive acid which no pre-industrial culture or social order can resist, the world requires a working model of the political and social institutions for an industrial age Without such a model to imitate and learn from, the mass production revolution can only produce decades of world war, chaos, despair, and destruction If the model is not furnished by the West, if it is not a model of a free industrial society, then it will be the model of a slave industrial society

Change in the "system," however radical, will not solve anything In fact, the basic problems of mass production organization and industrial enterprise are exactly alike whatever the "system," whether capitalist, socialist, communist, or fascist Indeed, while changes in the "system" will not affect the basis, the real problems of an industrial society which lie in the new institutions, the solutions we shall find—or fail to find—for the problems of mass production order and industrial enterprise, will decide under which "system" we shall live and, especially, whether or not that system shall be free

The great, the final, issue in the conflict of ideologies which rends our world is over the principles and beliefs on which the new institutions of the industrial order are to be based Our great and decisive task is to solve the problems of these new institutions through the application of the beliefs and principles of a free society that are the heritage of the Western tradition It is basically a conservative task the integration of the new on the basis of the best of the old But it is a conservative task requiring boldness, courage, imagination, and the willingness to go down to fundamentals

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What have been the effects of the introduction of mass production techniques on pre industrialized civilizations?
- 2 How does Drucker make clear his idea that mass production is more than an industrial technique? Why does he call it a principle of the social order?
- 3 Explain carefully the modern meanings of *specialization* and *integration*
- 4 Trace the principal effects of the introduction of mass production.
- 5 In what ways is the "big industrial enterprise" representative of our society?
- 6 What are the implications of the "revolution by mass production" for the United States?
- 7 Explain the division of the essay into 5 parts

- 8 Is the essay primarily expository or persuasive? Can you separate the explanations from the arguments?
- 9 How does this essay compare with the one by the N A M?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Do you feel that Drucker is justified in calling the changes brought about by mass production a revolution? Explain
- 2 To what extent has mass production had an effect on education as you have experienced it?
- 3 Can you suggest any specific changes in your high school or college training which might help young people to meet the challenge of mass production?
- 4 How can life for the ordinary person in a mass production society be made a satisfactory experience?
- 5 Do you think mass production has been worth what it has cost in human values?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 How an assembly line works.
- 2 Ford's contribution to modern life
- 3 The advantages (or disadvantages) of mass production
- 4 I prefer some things handmade.
- 5 Creativity in an era of mass production.
- 6 Machines and men

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## *Down on the Farm—New Style*

The industrial revolution has been slow coming to agriculture—but it is well on the way. The process was recently described in statistics by C. J. Copt, Director of the United States Census, in a talk to the National Rural Life Conference. He showed that the output per worker in 1940 had seven times the value of the output in 1870. He noted that in 1920 only one farm in 28 had a tractor, in 1940 it was one in four, and in 1945 it was one farm in three. With this mechanization, the expected has happened: the number of farms has decreased by half a

million while the average size of farms has increased from 140 acres to nearly 200. His figures show that the changes are greater in the past five years both for mechanization and for increased size, than they were for any comparable period earlier.

Director Capt stands at the head of what is probably the world's greatest repository of statistical information. The facts he cites are both accurate and significant. But his statistics do not and cannot tell what has happened to the manner of life in the rural community. To understand that one must examine the behavior of the people involved in the situation and the form that their society is taking.

Let me take you to three communities in California's industrialized agriculture. One of these is Wasco, a town of about 5,000 persons, surrounded by farms both large and small engaged in the intensive, mechanized, irrigated production of potatoes, cotton, sugar beets, and similar specialty crops. Arvin, the second town, has much the same crops, but its farms are predominantly large, and the largest was part of a combine which plead *nolo contendere* to a suit claiming they violated the Sherman anti-trust act. Dinuba's farming is similar in that agriculture is intensive and requires much labor and machinery, but in this case the farms are uniformly small. Because of this difference in farm size, the three towns give us an insight into the effects of progressive degrees of industrialization—Dinuba, Wasco, Arvin. All are, however, well within the pattern of farming that can only be described as industrialized—that is, where production involves mechanization, large investments of capital, and above all, labor hired in the same impersonal, production line manner as that of urban industries.<sup>1</sup>

To be understood, the picture of the industrialized farm community must be set in contrast to that of the American farm community in general. This latter picture has been stereotyped, and is widely known. It is reflected in the deliberations of Congress, and we can permit a member of the body to trace its major features.

The habits and customs of agriculture of necessity have been different from those of industry. The farmers and workers are thrown in close daily contact with one another. They in many cases eat at a common table. Their children attend the same school. Their families bow together in religious worship. They discuss together the common problems of our economic and political life. The farmer, his family and the laborers work together as one unit. In the times of stress, in the handling of livestock or perishable agricultural commodities of impending epidemics and at many other times the farmer and laborer must stand shoulder to shoulder against the common enemy. This develops a unity of interest which is not found in industry. This unity is more effective to remove labor disturbances than any law can be.

This is the ideal of American rural life—a stereotype reflecting realities.

that existed, say, at the turn of the century. It still has substance in many parts of the country, especially in the corn belt, where it has its deepest roots and provides the farmer with the greatest economic advantages. It does not reflect the reality of rural life in the cotton South, where it was always subordinated to the plantation system, or of the Southwest with its *hacienda* tradition. But most particularly, it does not agree with life in those areas where industrialized agricultural production techniques have been adopted, in California, which may be called the cradle of industrialized farming, and in some other regions as well. We may note the irrigated areas of Arizona and Idaho, the Yakima Valley in Washington, the Willamette and Hood River Valleys in Oregon, the beet sugar areas of Colorado, the Rio Grande and Winter Garden areas of Texas, the berry regions of Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Michigan, the Florida vegetable and citrus area, and the truck and vegetable farms of the Middle Atlantic seaboard.

These special regions of industrialized farming already loom large in America's agricultural production. But the pattern is spreading beyond these specialized areas to engulf large acreages of the wheat and corn areas of the prairies and plains. Paul Taylor reported this trend from personal observation, and documented it as early as 1941 in *Harper's Magazine*. The trend is implied in the figures, given before by Capt. of the Census Bureau, on increased size and mechanization of farms. Unchecked, the trend will engulf all the commercial farming areas of the nation. Where supports for small farm operations exist, as in areas brought into production by the irrigation works developed under reclamation law, and by the development of the TVA, small farms may continue to dominate the local scene. But even such areas, if they are engaged in commercial production rather than predominantly for local and on farm consumption, will be drawn into the vortex of the industrial pattern, because of the economic relationships which they must accept.

The industrialization of our farms first affects the personal character and conduct of the farmer. Then, it brings into rural life an army of agricultural laborers whose means of subsistence is directly comparable to that of the city laborer. Finally, it creates in the community a new kind of upper class. Taken together these three changes alter the relationship between man and man in the community in many ways, all of which belie the description of rural life as one in which the common interest prevails over minor disagreements.

Before he would say anything further, one Wasco farmer told me to set down that "farming in California is business, it is not a way of life." Another observed that the old dumb-bells just can't farm any more. What did these men mean? They meant that the farmer, if he is to be

successful (the very word, success, implies a great deal in their thinking) must adopt the viewpoint of a business executive. Why? Because he is in fact a business executive. There are many kinds of figures which might be cited in proof. Here are some. Agricultural production in California is costly, with land running from \$300 to \$1,000 per acre in normal times. A better measure is the cost of production itself. Farmers indicated that it cost nearly \$100 (at 1940 prices) to produce an acre of potatoes. Harvesting costs an additional \$50 to \$100 per acre, depending upon yield. Thus annual production costs on a modest 40 acres—they say in Wasco—that no “successful” farmer remains content with so little—run to at least \$6,000. Many a business enterprise in America has a smaller annual capital outlay than this minimum-sized farm.

If the Wasco farmer is to be financially successful he has to comport himself like a businessman. He must spend his time and energy in making sure that his capital—or the capital he has borrowed—yields its proper return. Amounts such as he deals with cannot be insured by small scale economies—such as doing his own repairs, being more thrifty about the house, or milking a family cow. The successful operator is not so concerned with the long straight furrow as he is with the stock market column. If he can't hire a broker's services, he must be particularly assiduous in his devotion to figures and friends in the market. If he is more than a minimum operator, he may integrate his operations—pack his own vegetables, wash his own potatoes, or carry on other preliminary processing activities. If he is really big, he may even make his own boxes and own his own timber in some distant forest. Inevitably, he is a speculator, and he learns that his own interests lie more directly with his speculative success than with his minor economies. He is not a laborer. Data compiled by the California Extension Service from several moderately large cotton growers' records show that the value of the farmers' own labor represents only 2.7 per cent of his production costs, and that only 15 cents of his income dollar may be attributed to the sweat of his own brow. Most of that dollar comes from what the business economists call “managerial ability.”

As a businessman the farm operator is concerned with costs, too. And if he examines his own accounting figures, he knows where his costs are heavy—in the hired labor column. When the Extension Service economists examined the cotton production costs in California they found that over half (54 per cent) were costs of hired labor. Naturally, the larger the producer, the greater is this labor cost. Thus, as a businessman, the farm operator is concerned with the wages he must pay, and his interest in low wages is a very important factor in the character of his community.

Incidentally, the California agriculturist does not call himself a farmer,

save when it is politically expedient to do so. In California, any plot of ground producing agricultural commodities is a ranch, however small, and the producer is a rancher. The grower does not align himself linguistically with the working farmer, but identifies himself with the romantic figure out of the West's past to express his economic and social status as a business executive.

It should be emphasized that mechanization hasn't done away with the need for labor any more than it has in factory production. Farm work is done by persons characteristically hired by the hour or day, or on a piece-rate basis. Even when farms are small, the number of resident farm wage-workers—not to be confused with the traditional hired hand, who is about as plentiful in California as the dodo—is equal to that of farmers. That was the proportion in Dinuba, the small farm town. Where farms are larger, half or more of the population are wage laborers, but in Arvin, where the large fully industrialized operations predominate, the wage laborers constitute more than four fifths of the population of the agricultural community.

America has learned, if not from Senator Robert M. La Follette's able investigations or from Carey McWilliams, then from John Steinbeck, the nature of the farm worker's life and opportunity in California. It is not necessary here to go into details concerning the poverty, low wages, the rural slum conditions, the ceaseless migration in search of jobs. The hardships suffered by underprivileged farm workers are a source of multiple human tragedy and cannot be ignored. They continue despite governmental action during the '30s, and despite the rich war years and post-war years that have followed. But here we may view them as symptoms of underlying social problems.

For we are concerned with the character of the society that has developed under industrial farming. It is a society of social classes, and class distinctions rest upon the kind of livelihood a man has. In industrial agriculture, those who perform the menial tasks—the picking of fruit and vegetables, the irrigating, haying or milking—are a group apart. When industrialized farms are small the 'rancher' drives a tractor, but he will not manipulate hand tools. Such work is degrading, and those who must perform it are not company for the emancipated. The farmer finds himself in a social class with the merchants in the town, and socially distant from those whom he employs to do his work. He does not share a common table with his employees, nor meet with them around a cracker barrel, nor worship with them on Sunday. Frequently he never sees them, even on modest enterprises, because they are 'handled' by contractors. They may live in shacks furnished by the operator or in similar structures



in the towns, they work on a temporary basis when the operator has a job to be done

Industrial farming affects the traditional figures of rural leadership—the local merchant, the successful farmer turned small town banker. They are replaced by new leaders largely furnished by the great business enterprises from outside the community. Thus in Wasco, in 1941, the representative of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company was called the “unofficial mayor” by local townspeople. He was flanked by representatives from the Bank of America, the Southern California Edison Company, the oil companies, the great cotton factories, and by numerous heads of the local branches of small chain enterprises. These people, together with the big farm operators or their local managers form the elite and exert great influence over community decisions and attitudes. For instance, fifteen Wasco families had members in five or more of the town’s leading civic organizations, and eight of these were representatives of outside corporations. Local merchants continue to find that outside corporations offer severe economic competition, they find it equally hard to maintain their position in the social and political life of the community. They complain that the time and effort of the corporation executive is subsidized by their outside employers. They recognize, too, that these outsiders, by the very nature of their employment, must give first consideration to the interest of their employers, rather than to the community. They do not deny the sincerity of their efforts, but they recognize that the corporation executives, sent to the local community at the pleasure of the corporation, by nature offer a different kind of “grass roots” leadership from that of one who was born and raised a part of the community, with his economic and social ties rooted there.

The cracker-barrel democracy of rural life is thus inevitably supplanted in industrial farming by a class society. There does remain a middle class of merchants, mechanics, and small farmers, but it is socially oriented to the money-value system set up by the leaders. This middle class is more numerous where farm units are small, and fewer where large-scale farming has taken over, but everywhere it appears to be waning. The great bulk of the population consists of a landless, dependent working class with few economic and fewer social ties, and completely without social standing or means of social expression in the community.

The workers on the one hand, and the corporation executives, merchants, and growers on the other, form separate social classes. They are social classes in the sense that modern sociologists use that term, that is to say, they do not regularly have contacts with members of the other group except when necessary for economic purposes, they live differently and hold more or less different attitudes and values. As a matter of fact, the

working class, though it now consists chiefly of native whites, is the legatee of racist attitudes which have for nearly a century been held with respect to earlier laboring groups in California, the Oriental and Mexican

Segregation along lines of occupation and wealth is fairly sharp. The social clubs, service clubs, and community affairs rarely include any of the working people and none of the farm laborers, though these have bought homes and settled in the community. Perhaps the most telling evidence of this class feeling lies in the fact that for the most part the farm laborers worship in separate churches from the members of the upper class. It is not that they are prevented or even actively discouraged from going to the "better" churches. Social segregation works more subtly. Nor is it merely a matter of choice of religious ideologies. The class feeling of segregation was repeatedly expressed to me by farm laborers who refused to go to the upper-class churches because they "wouldn't feel at home," or because they didn't have the proper clothes and preferred to go "where you can wear any old thing" or simply because they felt like being "with people of my own 'class'." As a result of this feeling, most of them go to no church at all, while many go to the newer denominations, where there is more membership participation, less formality, and a heightened emotional tone. Some make this change contrary to their doctrinal preferences. To some extent, of course, the spiritual needs of a depressed group are different from those of people comfortably situated, so that there are special appeals to many workers in the more emotional religious observances.

Religious segregation cannot, of course, be viewed with alarm, religious preferences, from whatever source, are a matter of individual choice. But religious segregation is symptomatic of the degree to which social differences influence the behavior and activities of the citizens of our industrialized farm communities.

The real test of democracy lies in the manner in which public decisions are reached. The exclusion of the laboring majority from decision making, and the antipathy toward the workers as a class, is the real hallmark of the substitution of class society for the social democracy of traditional American rural life. In Wasco, for instance, some county officials were considering changes in their county operated cemetery district. They went to the service clubs to get a "cross section of public opinion," a cross-section which excludes, by the social exclusion of the local class system, all the wage laborers in agriculture—those who would be the most likely to use the facility under discussion. In Arvin, the exclusion of laborers was more poignant. Here a county official told a service club of farmers and merchants that they should tell him how they wanted the laws enforced—he didn't "want to do anything that would run labor

out of the town" Wage workers constitute 80 per cent of Arvin's population

Even unincorporated communities have some elected officials In Wasco a school board election is generally routine and in 1941 there was no opposing candidate But when rumor spread that there was to be a "relief candidate write-in," the upper class went to their telephones to warn their friends to vote in the late afternoon in order to freeze out any such attempt The townpeople viewed with alarm the possibility that the working people might be represented on the school board, and would "take over the schools" The vote that year was double the preceding, but not a vote was cast for a farm laborer A minister in Arvin said that the reason his town was not incorporated lay in the fear that the laboring element would gain control of the community In a meeting held in Wasco to discuss incorporation, the propriety of voting by resident laborers was openly questioned because "they have no real interest in the community" Many of them are home owners

The incidents from communities in California's industrialized farming area illustrate the manner in which life has changed in the rural environment. The stereotypes employed by politicians and novelists give way to a social order partaking of the city Some of the direct effects of giant farm operations have already been pointed out An analysis of social conditions in Arvin and Dinuba offers a direct test of these effects The two towns are closely similar in the commodities produced, the volume of production and the mode of farm production But the farms in Arvin average nearly ten times the size of those in Dinuba In Arvin, in 1941, only 9 per cent of the land was held in units of eighty acres or less, as against 56 per cent in Dinuba

The differences between the two towns are also striking Dinuba's population is 20 per cent greater, and it has a higher average level of living Dinuba has far more civic improvement—paving, street lighting, sidewalks, sewers, garbage service, parks, and schools It has a far richer social life, with more clubs, churches, recreation facilities More significantly, it has an elected body of officials with direct control by the electorate An analysis of organization and church membership showed that Dinuba offered less of the social segregation which could be found in Wasco, while Arvin's segregation of social classes was far more intense than that of either of the other two

Most significant is the composition of the two populations Arvin consists chiefly of the poorly paid, low security wage workers, and part of these, for reasons indicated, take no part in community life Over half of Dinuba's population is made up of farmers, merchants, or other white collar workers This greater proportion of "middle class" people stems

directly from the fact that the farms are small. It is furthered by the fact that the small-farm community supports over twice the number of business establishments and these gross about two-thirds again as much retail business as the Arvin merchants. The middle-class element composed of a large body of persons who are economically independent, socially acceptable, and above all, rooted in the local community, greatly ameliorate the effects of industrial farming.

But the effects of large-scale operation reach a community like Dinuba, and it, too, is influenced by industrialization. One must avoid the pitfalls of a myopic view. The small town is not the true social universe in modern society. The inhabitants' lives are not completely circumscribed by their community, as was the case in pioneer days. On the contrary, the local towns are merely geographic segments of a broad society which similarly is divided into social classes. In everyday life, it means that the distant banker, merchant, or farmer has social access to people of similar occupation in Wasco while their wage earning neighbors do not. It means that ideas and attitudes spread horizontally, that the city banker may influence the local leader against his own neighbor, whom he actually does not know. Contrast this situation with our tradition of local democracy.

Outside influences determine behavior in the most significant aspects of personal relationship in the community. A poignant example is the determination of wages. The large growers of California have for many years met to decide what wages they will pay in the coming season for various operations. It is an open meeting, but working farmers find it difficult to travel hundreds of miles to attend, and one may wonder what their influence would be if they did. The wages established in these meetings are adhered to by the large farmers, and the small ones are expected to conform. Conformity is not policed, but the finance companies compute their advances to the farmer in terms of the established scale. If a farmer, motivated by a kindlier passion than the desire to drive a hard bargain, makes up the remainder out of savings, he endangers his relationship with those whose favor he must retain. Aside from these considerations, he is producing in competition with the big operators. Big operators have many advantages in buying and selling and it is hard enough for the small farmer to compete with them. To compete and pay higher wages is a burden that the small farmer can rarely carry.

This example of outside influence on community attitudes and behavior brings our attention to the most frequent sources of conflict between the rural social classes. The class differentiation and segregation is not limited to matters of local improvement and community welfare. It has the bitter taste of economic conflict, of labor-management relations

California agriculture has known bloody strikes. One of the worst started in Wasco and didn't end till two workers lay dead, not surprisingly, in Arvin. It is most significant that the strike was first announced in the *Western Worker*, published in San Francisco, in response to the setting of wages in Fresno, California.

Social behavior and institutions of the communities in California's industrialized fields, then, do not conform to the familiar stereotype of rural America. But will the pattern be similar if industrial production replaces the farmstead in Iowa and Nebraska, as the census figures suggest? The answer is yes, with qualifications.

Every community, like every individual, has its own peculiarities and its own personality. The seaboard countries with their West Indian imported laborers will display patterns foreign to those of California, and the Mexican workers in Texas' irrigated valleys and the Spanish Americans in the Colorado beet fields each impress upon those areas their peculiar flavor. But individuality in personality has not rendered nil psychological generalizations about behavior, and genetic variation does not nullify the medical concept of the normal individual. So, too, the social sciences can comprehend individual variation along with basic patterns of identity.

Comparable studies to those upon which this paper is based have not been made in other areas, but evidence that a similar pattern obtains is not entirely wanting. The pattern of strikes during the '30's followed closely the distribution of factory farm methods in the berry producing regions of Michigan, the truck areas of New Jersey, and the Florida intensive production areas. In all these locations, too, we have the same pattern of destitute laboring classes eking out the meagerest subsistence from seasonal employment. In such areas, the hired hand is replaced by the migrant worker, as in California. Stories of the importation of Mexican workers from Texas to the Michigan region are more heart rending than any that come from the contemporary California scene. Wherever the laboring group is also a separate racial or ethnic entity, the social segregation is, if possible, even more marked than in the Arvin of California.

But the extrapolation of the California picture to these other regions, and beyond these to the future areas to come under industrializing influences, does not rest solely upon these data. It stems rather, from the fact that the California situation demonstrates a basic causal relationship. For example, a similar pattern was described nearly half a century ago in an obscure doctoral dissertation on the history of Watertown, New York. The town had a long history of agricultural production and social life patterned after the tradition dominant in America. The even tenor of its ways—which included high valuation on thrift, work, industriousness,

Act of 1935, the Wagner Labor Relations Act and the machinery for the protection of collective bargaining are all specifically denied to the farm workers. This policy was continued during the war, with special draft exemptions for farm workers plus labor importation, and separate machinery for determining wage ceilings. Nothing since the close of hostilities has altered, and labor importation continues. It is obvious that the conditions of the farm workers can only be improved by the application of fair labor legislation.

In this context, the long and bitter strike against the Di Giorgio Farm at Arvin offers a particularly telling lesson. The union responsible for the strike action is the National Farm Labor Union (AFL). This union claims the support of approximately eight hundred members in the Arvin community, and these members have been on strike since early in September, 1947. The major issue is union recognition and the establishment of machinery for mediating grievances. The strike was called when Di Giorgio refused the union request to confer with respect to working conditions at his ranch. Although state and federal mediation boards have offered their services, Di Giorgio has rejected both. In the absence of any institutional techniques for adjudicating differences between management and labor, it is obviously impossible to develop a settled labor community.

It is perhaps not so obvious that the small operator will be benefited by the protection of the rights of labor, and the farmers themselves are unaware of the fact. There are in America only a million farmers who hire as much labor as they themselves perform. The rest of America's six million farmers receive their income chiefly as workers on their own land. What they get is based upon competitive prices, and they compete with the cheap, unprotected labor hired by the few big operators. The five million operators who do most of their own work will benefit by the increased wages which that competition will have to pay—a benefit which will go a long way to protect the institution of small farms against the ravages of large scale holdings.

Finally, the creation of small farms. Congress has appropriated billions of dollars for the construction of dams and canals so that millions of additional acres can be brought under intensive, industrialized production. Chief among these are the TVA, the Columbia Basin Project, and the Central Valley Project of California. It will appropriate much more to continue the growth of America. According to a law first passed in 1902, the water developed under the United States Bureau of Reclamation must be distributed to holdings of 160 acres or less. This law is known as the acreage limitation law, and was created out of fear of the very social consequence of large land holdings which have just been described. A major development under this law is the Central Valley

Project, which is to bring a million acres of land under cultivation. The dams are built and most of the canals are constructed.

In 1944, in accord with the desires of the large operators, Representative Alfred J. Elliott of Tulare County, California, attempted to exempt California from the law. This attempt was defeated after a bitter fight, by staunch Senators of the 78th Congress who killed a multi-million dollar appropriations act to get rid of it. Senator Sheridan Downey of California has introduced new legislation to the same effect. If it passes, Congress will not only lose its opportunity for creating small farms in California, but will give large farm interests the perfect tool for similar action in all future programs of land development.

Congress and the people cannot stem the march of industrialization, they cannot move back the clock to an earlier, simpler time. But Congress and the people can create a modern democratic rural society by constructive legislation in terms of realities, laws that will preserve and create small farms operated within the new industrial tradition, but maintaining an urban kind of social democracy.

## NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Wasco was visited over a period of about eight months in 1940-41 and a rather detailed investigation was made of the nature of its social life. Arvin and Dinuba were studied in 1944 specifically to determine the effects of large scale farming upon them. A detailed report on this last problem will be found in Walter Goldschmidt, *Small Business in the Community: A Study in the Central Valley of California on Effects of Scale of Farm Operation*. Report of the Special Committee to Study Problems of American Small Business, U.S. Senate (79th Congress, Second Session), Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. December 23, 1946. A detailed account of the three towns, with particular emphasis upon Wasco, appears in my *As You Sow* (Harcourt, Brace, 1947).

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. How is farm size related to agricultural mechanization?
2. Describe the traditional stereotype of life on the farm.
3. Explain the effect of industrialization on the character and conduct<sup>1</sup> of the farmer.
4. How does industrialization affect farm labor?
5. Who make up the new upper classes in farm communities?
6. How do Arvin and Dinuba compare as farm communities? What accounts for the differences?
7. Is the situation described by Goldschmidt peculiar to California? Explain.
8. What are the three elements of a good farm program as listed by Goldschmidt?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Do you agree that small farms are so necessary and desirable in the United States that special efforts should be made to create and preserve them? Why?
- 2 Are the problems brought about by farm mechanization attributable to the process itself or to something in the nature of man?
- 3 Are the results of farm mechanization inevitable? Does our experience with large scale industry suggest any ways of handling the problem?
- 4 To what extent should social controls be established over the process of mechanization?
- 5 What are the values of individualism and how can they be preserved?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Down on the farm—old style
- 2 Farming as a way of life
- 3 Problems of modern farming.
- 4 The advantages of rural life
- 5 Farm labor and city labor
- 6 I was raised on a farm
- 7 A democratic society needs (or does not need) dirt farmers

## BARBARA WARD

born 1914 was educated at Somerville College Oxford where she took an honors degree in Philosophy Politics and Economics She is a former governor of the British Broadcasting Corporation and former foreign editor of the London Economist In addition to writing many pamphlets she is the author of *The West at Bay* and *Policy for the West*. [The Illusion of Power, Copyright 1952 by The Atlantic Monthly Company Boston 16 Massachusetts]

## *The Illusion of Power*

### I

It may seem curious to call the nineteenth century an age of tremendous certainties. It witnessed controversies as personally tragic and institutionally far reaching as the weakening of traditional Christianity before the onslaught of rationalism, Darwinism, and the higher criticism. Nor does it seem possible to put together in the same broad flood of confidence views of society as apparently opposite as those of the



Marxists and of the Manchester school. But an age is marked not by those who fight the rear-guard actions—which, on the whole, the Christians and the traditionalists did a century ago. The stamp of an epoch is given by those who look forward, and the remarkable proof of the underlying certainty of the nineteenth century is that the prophets, whether they were the liberal prophets of *laissez faire* or the Marxist prophets of the exact opposite, were more strongly united by certain underlying beliefs, prejudices, and indeed blindnesses than they were divided by their bitter quarrel over property and social organization.

Liberals and left-wing revolutionaries shared the same faith in a world which science would completely lay bare and in a species of history which moved inexorably from a less satisfactory past to a more satisfactory future. The content of this progress might be different but the sense of direction was identical. Even their quarrel over the ownership of property had a curious family resemblance. For the Marxists the good of society depended upon common ownership. For the liberals, the good of society and freedom itself depended upon private ownership. The form of their controversy thus excluded the possibility that decent social forms might not depend exclusively upon ownership at all. Behind their bitter dispute, they shared a profound materialism.

Even more remarkable than these shared beliefs were perhaps the shared indifferences. The 'new thinkers' of last century shared the same kind of blind eye. It is true that the Communists foresaw all sorts of disasters so long as capitalism survived. Imperialisms, wars, depressions, dictatorships would follow in catastrophic flood. In this, the Communists had more prescience than the liberal reformers who expected a painlessly progressive future. But Marxist thought must be judged not only for its insights into society under private ownership but for its prophecies of society under public ownership, and here liberal and Marxist were significantly alike in what they ignored.

The liberal assumed that the working of economic laws with the minimum of state intervention, would lead to a peaceful international division of labor, to harmony and plenty within society and to a growing unity of humanity—to Tennyson's *federation of the world and parliament of man*. Equally Marx foresaw, once public economics had replaced private interest, the unity of mankind, the withering away of the state and the reign of peace and brotherhood.

The profound issues which both systems virtually ignored were the nature of power, its effect on human personality, its congealing at the level of the nation state, and the conflict or reconciliation of national and international interests. Equally both systems glossed over the relation of power to the kind of institutions industrialism was likely to create and to

the kind of means of control—by radio, by rapid transport, by armament—which science was placing in the hands of institutions Marx could recognize evils and dangers in a society based on private property, but his acuteness vanished in a rosy haze at the prospect of public ownership. The liberals hardly even recognized the dangers. The extraordinary sense of progress, of history thrusting forward from “precedent to precedent,” of knowledge growing and mastery increasing, kept the eye of prophecy—liberal or Marxist—hard down on the single common track.

## 2

This peculiar fellowship in optimism is quite enough to explain the quality and the extent of the frustration that has overtaken so many men and women in the Western world during the last two or three decades. The liberal has seen his dream of progress shattered by disasters fully as horrible as the most avid Marxist could foretell. For a time, particularly in the thirties, some liberals took refuge from their broken dream by turning to Marxism—just as other liberals, the liberal businessmen of Europe, for instance, resorted instead to Fascism.

But the respite was brief, for Communist society has shown itself to be even more disastrous and repellent than the catastrophe ridden world of the decade before the war. Not only has the vision of progress faded. It is precisely those potentialities of modern society to which progressive thought in the nineteenth century devoted almost no attention that now make a mockery of the earlier dream.

No one fully foresaw the mass state, the mass city, mass production, mass entertainment. No one foretold the sudden blowing up of the old market and seaport towns into monstrous “conurbations” packed as tight as ant heaps. The organization of factory life in factory towns, the coming of large scale agriculture, the advent of total war—the significance of all these things lay below the horizon of confident nineteenth century thought. Only a few prophets and seers—men of the stamp of a Thoreau or a Ruskin—could know by intuition to what belittling of man the coming of all these vastnesses might lead.

Institutions on such a scale were bound to pass beyond the capacity of ordinary individuals to control. The need to manipulate mass organizations called for new types of managerial technique. The civil servant, the executive director, the union leader, the party boss found that the threads of power were collecting in their hands. It was the power which in other contexts became the strangle hold on society of the Commissar and the secret police.

This concentration of power which now bears Burnham's title “the managerial revolution” can be understood by hindsight to be inseparable

from the new techniques of industry and science. It was not foreseen and perhaps even we, with the evidence before us, can still be startled by at least one singular feature of our contemporary centralizing of authority. It has a phenomenally impersonal quality. Power has been seized in the past and tyranny is the oldest form of government. Such despots as Frederick Hohenstaufen even created bodies with a family likeness to the Black Shirts or the NKVD of modern times. But the brutality, the power, the flamboyance and display, were all intensely personal and the groups and organizations were subordinate to the astonishingly individual character of the prince or duke or *condottiere* they obeyed and served—or betrayed. The dictators of today are of a very different stamp. As Edmund Wilson has pointed out: "It is no age of authentic leaders in the departments of statesmanship or thought, Stalin and Hitler were produced by the swarm, in the manner of queen bees."

Confronted with these realities of a social order so alien to human personality and human freedom, men and women in this century have, not surprisingly, lost their sense of the old certainties. Science is known as both liberator and destroyer, the outcome depending upon the decisions of men to whose behavior science provides only the most un-specific clues. Trust in progress has undergone a similar modification. Progress in the sense of progression no one doubts, for society does not stand still. But the direction may be up or down. Perhaps one of the clearest statements of the changed attitude towards progress can be found in the *New Fabian Essays* recently published in Britain by members of the Fabian Society—the group that has long acted as the brains trust of the Labor Party. There Mr. R. H. S. Crossman writes: "So far from viewing history as a steady advance towards freedom, we should regard *exploitation and slavery as the normal state of man and view the brief epochs of liberty as tremendous achievements*." And in the same paragraph, Crossman throws overboard the basic materialism of so much earlier Socialist thinking when he says: "Social morals, freedom and equality do not grow by any law of economics or politics but only with the most careful cultivation." Material conditions cannot be relied on to produce the good life. Its achievement must depend upon the social conscience of an active minority, and this conscience will be dormant if reformers base their policy "on the materialist fallacy that material progress makes men either free or equal."

### 3

It is not only on the Left that the old dogmatisms have weakened. In Europe today there are only scattered remnants of the old crusading liberal faith. It is true that there has been a considerable revival of liberal economics since the war, with the old reliance on the market as an

economic regulator and on competition. But this is not so much the revival of a philosophy as a revulsion against Nazi and Fascist—and Petainist—state control, wartime economics, and socialist pressure. The remarkable point about the Liberal parties in Europe is their lack of philosophic principle and their dependence upon the Christian Conservative parties with which, in the main, they have formed coalitions. There is undoubtedly a good deal of hardheaded practical materialism in European business today. But it has no philosophical pretensions.

In fact, only in the United States does the old belief seem to survive that free enterprise is the source and not the product of free institutions. But this outlook cannot be accounted liberal in the nineteenth-century sense. A hundred years ago the liberals who demanded freedom for enterprise asked it as confidently for ideas, for education, for speech and publication. Confidence in progress and knowledge and scientific discovery accompanied the desire to limit government intervention in all spheres. Today, however, many of those who seek to limit state interference in business appear to welcome it in most other activities—particularly in the sphere of thought and education. In this they seem, therefore, to have taken on the old outlook of nineteenth-century conservatism with its deep distrust of popular enlightenment and its urgent drive for political conformity. The spirit is rather of Metternich than of Cobden or John Bright.

Perhaps the most obvious proof that the old dogmatisms are passing is in the reaction of both the Right and Left, particularly in Europe, to what used to be the touchstone of politics—the question of state control of industry. The Socialist parties in Europe, in their last international manifesto, abandoned the aim of public ownership over the whole of the economy. Each issue, they decided, should be settled on its merits. In this, they were greatly influenced by the British Labor Party, whose second thoughts on nationalization are little short of revolutionary. The *avant-garde* of Labor thinking—the Fabians and the Socialist Union—both published statements last summer limiting the scope and importance of nationalization and attacking the notion that it is *the* central, essential fact of Socialist policy.

The important Labor parties of Scandinavia and Australasia have never put nationalization high on their programs. And the second thoughts in Britain are certain to have an effect in Asia. In such countries as India or Burma, state action will undoubtedly play a very large part in the future, since there is no large middle class of potential entrepreneurs upon whom free enterprise can be built up—another proof that free enterprise, far from creating freedom itself, can only exist under certain pre-existing social and political conditions. But in the last eighteen months,

both governments have underlined the need to cooperate with foreign enterprise, and in India the Minister of Commerce has even praised private British firms as models and pace setters for local industry

In spite of fervent affirmations to the contrary, supporters of free enterprise have also changed their ground. It is not simply that the established democracies of the free world fundamentally accept the idea of state-directed social welfare with all its ramifications. They believe, too, in state intervention to prevent catastrophic unemployment or to regulate the intricate problems of foreign trade.

It is also significant that the most conservative governments in Europe are those which are taking the lead in transferring Europe's iron and steel and coal—the whole basis of the economy—to a new type of public authority under the Schuman Plan. However much the old fight for and against the state may still haunt party platforms and programs, the substance of the disagreement has changed unrecognizably, the Right conceding the state more power, the Left withdrawing in alarm from excessive state control. The gap that remains is no more than experience, changing conditions, varying problems and pragmatic solutions can adjust. Dogma does not enter in.

Yet if all the landmarks—of certainty or dispute—have vanished, what is left? Are we reduced, as Matthew Arnold foresaw, to a darkling plain

Where ignorant armies clash by night? To a measure of darkness and confusion, we must be reconciled. It is the burden of the time. But there is more than that. If, eighty years ago, men of insight could sense the coming of disaster underneath the brilliant surface of their society, so today there seem to be signs of new thoughts stirring behind the implacable visage of this century. They are, in a sense, implicit in what has already been said about our disillusion and loss of certainty. Men lose faith and confidence because what has happened does not match with their ideals. But the ideals remain, as yardsticks, as judgments and as clues to new lines of action and attack. It is where the disillusion is greatest that one may expect to trace the beginnings of a new approach.

The core of contemporary disillusion is the conspiracy of industrialism, nationalism, science, and mass communication to produce an inhuman order of society. Probably the really significant division in this age is no longer between Right and Left, or progressives and conservatives or radicals and traditionalists. It is between those who, consciously or not, accept the new inhuman totalitarian order and those who do not.

This is by no means a straightforward division, for we know that the totalitarian order can be reached as well from the Right—via Nazism—as from the Left via Communism. We also know that men and indeed whole societies can fall into one type of totalitarianism by the very ex-

tremism of their resistance to another brand Hitler's master card in the early thirties was anti Communism It is one of the most striking characteristics of so much anti Communism today, particularly when conducted by ex Communists, that it brings totalitarian energies, attitudes, and methods to the fight against totalitarianism The literature written by many ex Communists is full of such phrases as "total choice," "absolute crisis," and "historical necessity" It gives the nightmare impression of belonging to the thing it attacks

Nor is this proneness to totalitarian infection simply a matter of ideology There are men and women who are what one might call natural totalitarians—those whose passion for power and whose strength and ambition are satisfied, not repelled, by the opportunities for control and manipulation offered by modern mass organization and means of communication In business, in trade union activity, within the civil service, they are the active agents of centralization and dictatorial control A newspaper owner, for instance, who uses the megaphone which has been attached to his mouth by the extent of his publications in order to distort, twist, conceal, and manipulate the news or to lash up public moods of fear and violence is a totalitarian A politician who exploits a radio personality to get mass hysteria on his side is a little Hitler Trade union bosses who fake branch voting, business leaders who exploit a protected market to extort monopoly prices—they have the tinge of absolutism in them and contribute, like the hidden workers of a coral reef, to the building up, cell by cell, of an inhuman centralized mass society

It is therefore of little use to apply existing labels to the new division in society It cuts across them all and is itself, so far, without definitions or slogans But it can perhaps be given body by an attempt to describe some of the policies which it seems to inspire and the principles upon which it appears to draw Such a survey must inevitably be fragmentary and lacking in definition Only hindsight gives certainty and the full vision But even hints and premonitions are significant. The cloud no bigger than a man's hand at last brings the rain

It was to the industrial worker that Marx looked for the revolt that would bring about the classless society, and although the development of the Western working class has very largely belied Marx's predictions, he was not wrong in foreseeing that their dissatisfaction and protest would play a central part in the development of industrial society Without property, without stake in the community, exposed to the hazards of unemployment and to meaningless repetitive work, they were the anonymous units out of which the ant society seemed most likely to be built. It was in fact the unemployed workers of Germany who, in their millions, turned to Nazism and Communism after 1929

to nationalization. In the statements of principle published by the Fabians and by the Socialist Union this year, the reason the idea of "nationalization" as an end in itself was considerably modified lay in the fact that state ownership does not necessarily affect or improve the worker's sense of "belonging" and of playing a significant part in his daily work. Indeed, the Socialist Union now makes "responsible participation" the fundamental aim of left-wing policy in our growing managerial society.

## 5

The instrument of totalitarian rule has invariably been the state—the state, captured by a single party and making absolute claims first on its own citizens and then, where power allowed, on its neighbors. It is therefore not surprising that deeper reflection on the state and on its responsibilities is another thread in the web of this century's new thinking. The change in mental climate is naturally more noticeable on the Left, where acceptance of state action has long been almost automatic. There are many symptoms of this new approach—the interest in decentralization, the turning away from direct physical controls and planning to the more flexible methods of financial control, the decline in nationalization as a dogma. It implies no retreat from the belief that the power of government must be used purposefully for the welfare of the community. It does imply far more caution about the manner in which the power can best be exercised.

But in the matter of the sovereign state's external relations, it must be admitted that both Right and Left, conservatives and radicals, have all had in them a strong strain of absolutism. It is not only the totalitarians who accept no claims beyond those of their own nation-state. They may have pushed the notion of sovereignty to hideous lengths. But the exclusive rights of the sovereign nation has also been and still is a thoroughly democratic fallacy. May one not discern here too, however, the beginnings of a new trend of thought? One strand is the renunciation of imperialism in which Britain has been the pace-setter for the old colonial empires of Europe. Another is the urge towards federation, which is already producing its first concrete achievement in the pooling of Europe's iron and steel under the Schuman Plan—a movement which has undoubtedly owed much to American enthusiasm for the federal principle and the example, from the federal United States, of what benefits the federation of a wide area can bring in terms of prosperity, freedom of movement, extended horizons, and courage for new ventures.

Another strand in our new international thinking is the new sense of mutual interdependence which helped to create the Marshall Plan and may yet solve the problem of long-term equilibrium in international

trade and make a fact of Western assistance to backward areas. The notion of each state being sufficient to itself and securing its own interests by unilateral action dies hard—just as, no doubt, five or six millennia ago, the primitive tribal instinct died even harder. But once the West had been forced to abandon the optimistic nineteenth-century confidence that each man and each nation, by serving his own interests, automatically served the good of all, there were only two roads ahead, either to assert the primacy of power and of selfish nationalism or to seek a system of cooperation. The totalitarians have chosen the former way. With confusion of mind and perturbation of spirit, the Western powers are edging towards the other.

These points of new growth in modern society still lack coherence and they have not yet been strikingly expressed either in a political program or in the full development of a masterwork—a book of the weight of a *Discourse on Method*, a *Wealth of Nations*, or *Das Kapital*. Indeed, it may well be that no strikingly original work will crystallize the new thinking since one of its most remarkable characteristics is its turning back to earlier ideas and older wisdom in the very process of trying to create a tolerable society in the post-atomic age. Somerset Maugham once remarked that “great ideas are too important to be new” and there is no doubt that, in strong reaction against the facile rationalism and naïve confidence in science and material progress of the last century, men are turning from institutions and abstractions—such as class, dialectic, conditioning, group interest, and all the jargon of superficial sociology—to the central and eternal problem of man himself.

After a century of interest in conditioning and environment—an interest which has added permanent insights to our knowledge of human behavior—the pendulum is swinging back to the human being upon whom the external influences go to work. He is profoundly affected by his society—but in turn it bears his mark, and the more men strive to overcome the anonymity and irresponsibility of mass civilization, the more urgently they have to consider the quality of the individual citizens in it. As the *New Fabian Essays* suggest: “Every economic system, whether capitalist or socialist, degenerates into a system of privilege and exploitation unless it is policed by a social morality which can only reside in a minority of citizens.” Or, as a considerably shrewder observer of human nature once put it, “The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves”—not in our environment, our conditioning, our collective excuses for individual irresponsibility, but in the choice of our moral will.

If, however, the crucial importance of individual will and individual action is recognized again, there can be no escape from the further



problem of how men are to be persuaded to accept social responsibility and to become the conscience of the community. In other words, how can society guarantee that supply of good men on whose integrity, generosity, forbearance, and charity the wholesomeness of the community depends? Bertrand Russell can say, on his eightieth birthday, looking back over a life spent in the vanguard of rationalist thought, "What the world needs is more charity, more Christian compassion, more love." But how are the springs of love to be unsealed? Self-interest is not the answer. Social conformity is not the answer. Education is only a part of the answer since, before you educate, you must know what principles are to be taught. Here is the last and fundamental break from nineteenth-century thinking. Neither material progress nor science nor environment automatically generates good men and women. How is it to be done?

It would be tempting to give the answer in terms of religion. It is true that Catholicism has recovered great influence in Europe and is one of the main forces behind the efforts at federation. It is also true that the British Labor Party has become steadily more aware of its Methodist roots. One can also point to notable conversions and to a far greater general interest in religious thought. But what seems still to be lacking is one of the fundamentals of any genuine religious revival—the sense of the need for help. There were as many honest men at the time of Augustus as there are today who said that only a revival of integrity and charity and *pietas* could save the Commonwealth. There were as many men then as now who accepted the Golden Rule and believed that men should be ruled by love. But it seems that they were more agonized and more despairing than we are at the capacity of man, as man, to pull himself up, as it were, by his own spiritual bootstraps, to shake off the weight of custom and sin and encrusted self-interest. So it was that the beginning of Christianity came, not as an injunction to "love one another," but as the tremendous news of God Himself coming to the rescue, dying and rising and conquering sin and death.

Of this type of awareness, our modern world shows not much trace. The revival of interest is in ethics rather than religion. It is the age of the Stoics, noble, well intentioned, capable of immense good. We do not yet know whether humility will follow, and with humility, grace.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What does the author say were the chief characteristics of thought in the 19th century? To what extent are these characteristics common to both liberal and Marxist thought?
- 2 How has the centralization of authority brought about by industrialization contributed to our disillusionment?

- 3 In Ward's opinion is free enterprise the cause or the result of free institutions? Explain
- 4 What is the most significant division between people in today's world?
- 5 What differences in thinking about employment, the worker's status and the state have come about in recent years?
- 6 In view of the new emphasis on the individual human being what does Ward have to say about the development of good men in our society?
- 7 Make an outline of the article

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What is a good man in terms of our present-day society?
- 2 Do you agree with Ward that education is actually secondary in the production of good men—or can education help develop ideas of what men should be as well as shape men according to ideas already developed?
- 3 What can society do to help prevent the rise of totalitarian tendencies in human beings?
- 4 How is one's personal code of ethics developed? Does society have anything to do with the process?
- 5 Why do you think it is (or is not) possible to achieve certainty in today's world?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 The totalitarian teacher
- 2 Free enterprise could not exist without free institutions.
- 3 How to live in an uncertain world
- 4 Education and free men.
- 5 Everybody benefits when the worker benefits.

## GERALD W JOHNSON

born 1890 journalist editor and writer has been Professor of Journalism at the University of North Carolina (1924-26) editorial writer for the Baltimore Evening Sun (1926-1939) and author of many books on politics economics and history [From *This American People* by Gerald W Johnson published by Harper & Brothers by permission of the author, Copyright 1951 by Gerald W Johnson]

## *Free Speech Is for Bold People*

The six proper aims of government mentioned in the preamble to the Constitution are all supports of the three unalienable rights named in the Declaration of Independence To form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the com

mon defense" are four efforts in behalf of life and liberty, to "promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity" are two efforts in behalf of the pursuit of happiness

The right to life needs no definition. The right to the pursuit of happiness is defined differently by every man, which is to say, in effect, that it cannot be strictly defined. But although men have always considered "liberty" as capable of definition, the definitions have always been open to dispute. The framers of the Constitution were reluctant to attempt one, taking the ground that, like "life," the word defined itself, but the people were not satisfied and it soon became evident that the nine State ratifications necessary to put it in force would never be secured unless there were added to the Constitution an express statement of what that word was to mean.

Americans, who in 1787 were still for the most part English, or at least British, in origin, naturally thought of the British precedent. Almost a century earlier, in 1689, a new government had been formed in Great Britain. The oppressions and, what one may suspect were still more annoying to the British, the stupidities and downright idiocies of the government of James II had become intolerable, so in 1688 the people rose, threw him out and called to the throne his daughter Mary, who had married the Dutchman William of Orange. In those days William was a questionable choice, foreign, and not even royal, for Orange had long been absorbed by France and he was merely a Stadtholder, not a prince, in Holland.

It seemed prudent, therefore, to make sure that he understood the liberties of Englishmen before he was permitted to mount the throne. They were accordingly embodied in a written document which was submitted to William and Mary, and not until they had both formally accepted that document as law binding the sovereign as well as the subject were they permitted to reign. This document was called "the Bill of Rights," and it was so highly regarded that it had become almost a sacred writing among all the people of the empire.

So when the American people noted that in the original Constitution the liberties of the citizen were rather sketchily defined, they balked. They demanded that a Bill of Rights be added to the instrument, and not until it was promised did nine States ratify. Accordingly, the first Congress in its first session submitted twelve amendments to the States, ten of which were adopted,<sup>1</sup> and have since been known as the Bill of Rights. So when the preambles say "liberty" the word must be accepted as it is construed in the Bill of Rights.

The first article in that Bill—which is the first amendment of the Constitution—takes up the negative aspect of the question. It reads: "Con-

gress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances "

The wording is curious "Congress shall make no law . . ." Congress is not merely forbidden to touch these things, it is forbidden even to try to touch them Religion, speech, and assembly are not proper subjects for discussion by Congress In the whole passage there is only one modification, the assembly protected must be peaceable No protection is guaranteed to riotous mobs

Religion, speech, including printed speech, and public discussion in peaceable assemblies, are all matters in the field of opinion Worship and utterance have to do with what a man thinks, what he does comes later What the framers of the Constitution say on this subject is absolute, admitting no doubts, no exceptions, no modifications except "peaceable" applied to assemblies, and assemblies involve movement of bodies as well as activity of minds

This means that the framers of the Constitution drew a clear distinction between the two kinds of liberty, liberty of movement and liberty of thought, or freedom of the body and freedom of the mind Freedom of the body is limited by the simple fact that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time Hence, where I am and have a right to be, you cannot have a right to intrude, your liberty vanishes when it comes into collision with my right, so any law drawn by sane men must admit that freedom of the body is not and cannot be absolute

But the men whose thinking dominated the country in 1787 believed that freedom of the mind is of a different order It can be, and they thought it should be, absolute While two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time, two minds can hold the same thought at the same time, their doing so is, in fact, the basis of all society Since they cannot know that they are thinking alike until they express their thoughts to each other, it follows that absolute freedom of speech is an essential condition of absolute freedom of mind

One of the most influential men of the time, Thomas Jefferson, put the idea into words so eloquent that they have been remembered and quoted ever since "I have sworn upon the altar of God," he said, "eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man " Without doubt he used the word "tyranny" in the usual sense of oppressive and unjust rule, but in the beginning "tyrant" meant any absolute ruler, even a mild and beneficent one, and it is highly probable that if anyone had questioned him Jefferson would have said he was hostile to that form of rule, also, when it is applied to the minds of men

But all this refers to a man's right to express the work of his mind, that is, his thoughts, not his emotions or his wishes. Hating, for example, is not thinking, and when a man uses words to express mere hatred, as when he stands up and curses his enemy in a public place, he is not exercising the right of free speech guaranteed by the Constitution. The law assumes that what he is really trying to do is not to express an opinion, but to provoke a fight, and maliciously disturbing the peace is not a right, it is a crime.

In the same way, a lie is not an opinion. If one had proclaimed publicly, 'On February 20, 1781, I saw Thomas Jefferson steal a sheep,' he would not have been expressing an opinion, he would have been telling a lie. He did not think anything of the kind, for a man does not think without a reason and there would have been no reason in this case.

If, however, he had seen a tall, sandy-haired man whom he mistook for Thomas Jefferson take some other man's sheep there would have been a reason, although a bad one, and the man might have been expressing an opinion, Jefferson would have allowed his right to speak, subject only to the condition that he offer proof of what he said. If he had no proof, any honest man would thereupon offer Jefferson an apology and whatever amends he could make, and a dishonest man should be compelled to offer them. That is the basis of the modern law against libel and slander, which is aimed, not at the expression of honest opinion, but at the propagation of lies.

There is an explanation of the extreme position taken by the founders of this republic on freedom of the mind. It is the fact that the British government and, for that matter, all other governments, had believed it necessary to bind the minds of the people to maintain public order. The theory was that all government would go to pieces unless the people maintained at least an outward respect for their rulers. As a matter of fact, it is a sound theory, the flaw in the reasoning was the failure to admit that it is possible for the people to be their own rulers. If the American people ever lost their respect for themselves, the American government would not last long.

But if you admit that respect for their governors by the governed is essential to public order, and if you admit—as monarchies assumed—that the people cannot be their own governors, then the theory of sedition held by the government of George III was reasonable enough. In 1781 Thomas Jefferson was governor of Virginia. Ten years earlier, in 1771, he would have been not only governor, but also ruler of Virginia by grace of the king, the final authority, but in 1781 he was governor by grace of the people, and not a ruler, but the people's agent.

So in 1771 it would have been sedition to say publicly that the gover

nor stole a sheep, if it were a lie, but if true it would have been twice as seditious, because it would have shaken faith in all government. The immunity from criticism accorded to rulers was designed to protect not so much the men as public order.

Once the people became their own rulers, however, this reasoning fell to the ground. Self respect cannot be established or maintained by law, and it would have been preposterous for the British to enact laws forcing the king to respect a rascally governor, simply because he held the title by grace of the king. The American people are the sovereign power in this country and have a right to know the whole truth about their agents. Hence, if a governor steals a sheep it is not sedition, it is patriotic duty for any man who knows about it to inform the people. That is one reason why it is ordained that Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of speech.

So in 1787, when the Constitution was framed, our forefathers did everything within their power to establish freedom of the mind as absolute, admitting no exceptions and accepting no modifications. It was, however, freedom of the mind, not of the emotions. The right is guaranteed to a man who is thinking, not to one who is merely hating, or envying, or, on the other hand, idolizing, and therefore lying.

To dispute this is to deny that those men knew the English language, for their words are as plain as it was possible to make them—"Congress shall make no law respecting religion or abridging freedom of speech. Congress cannot even forbid an establishment of religion. All the states have written similar clauses in their own constitutions," but if one had not there would be nothing to prevent its setting up a State Church tomorrow. Congress could do nothing about it.<sup>3</sup> Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of speech or the press. Since the only just reason for discussion in Congress is to determine what laws shall be made, it is clear that the Founding Fathers intended to prevent Congress from even talking about these subjects. They are separated and removed from the field of government.

Furthermore, the intent is proved by deeds as well as words. Freedom of religion, of speech, of the press, and of assembly was not decreed without opposition. There was a minority in the Constitutional Convention that regarded them all with grave suspicion, and that minority included men as able as John Adams and Alexander Hamilton. During the second administration of President Washington the party to which this minority belonged became the majority party, elected Adams to the Presidency, and once in power proceeded to enact the Sedition Laws of 1798.

These were a reversion to the old British—really European—idea that

if the great officers of state were subjected to criticism limited only by the laws against libel and slander, the government would be endangered, so it was made a crime not only to tell lies, but also to speak disrespectfully of the President, of Congress, and of various other of ficeholders. Even if you told the truth it could still be disrespectful, and if disrespectful it was criminal.

The reaction against this law was so terrific that it destroyed the party. Adams was not only defeated for re-election, but neither he nor Hamilton ever held national office again, although they were two of the ablest men in America.

Adams was especially unfortunate. In the first place, the Sedition Laws were not his idea, and in the second his support of them was not at all tributary, as the majority of the voters came to believe, solely to his arrogance and personal vanity. He thought he saw pretty good reasons for legislation of the kind. Conditions then were curiously similar to those of today. Abroad, the mightiest army in the world was in the hands of men whom Adams could only regard as bloody minded tyrants. These men were loudly and frantically boasting that they meant to overwhelm and abolish every other system of government in the world and impose their own upon the conquered nations, and they seemed well on the way to doing it. That system was to John Adams an appalling travesty of democracy, like the Soviet government of Russia in 1951, it claimed to be more democratic than the democracies, but it allowed its own people no real freedom and maintained its power by one blood-dripping purge after another. The French Jacobins shocked and horrified conservative Americans fully as much as the Russian Communists did a century and a half later.

At home, too, Adams confronted a situation with which this generation should be able to sympathize. A small but noisy minority of American liberals, those endowed with more enthusiasm than judgment, had gone crazy over the new ideas proclaimed by France and were actually displaying more loyalty to France than to their own country. In Washington's time the Jacobins had sent here a diplomat worse than any the Soviets have dispatched to this country, he fitted out privateers in American ports and sent them to attack British shipping, he tried to raise an American legion to fight with the French army, and he went up and down the country denouncing the President and calling on Americans to repudiate his leadership. He got so bad that Secretary of State Jefferson, although he was sympathetic with the French Revolution, advised the President to demand this Genet's recall.

Nevertheless, the poison continued to work. It was easy for Adams to believe, when he came to the Presidency, that the criticism directed at

him was not in fact the expression of real opinion, but an effort to serve France by damaging the United States. This was certainly natural. Most of us are tempted to attribute bad motives to those who speak slightly of us. So Adams saw one newspaper editor after another thrown into jail, or subjected to heavy fines, for criticizing the administration, and the country came to believe that he was, if not actually a tyrant yet, in the way of becoming one. That finished him. At the same time it reaffirmed the words of the Constitution as meaning exactly what they said.

Adroit Jefferson, following Adams as President, accepted the verdict and acted upon it. He immediately released every critic of government still held in jail and remitted the fines of others. This constituted acknowledgement by the executive branch of the government that the people's judgment was to be accepted. So both by action of the people at the ballot box and by formal admission of the government itself, it is established that freedom of speech, especially as regards criticism of the government, cannot be abridged by act of Congress.

But all this happened between 1787 and 1801. A hundred and fifty years have passed, bringing enormous changes, and the pessimistic view of Adams and Hamilton is held once more by a strong party that may be now, or may soon become, the majority party. In 1951 the President of the United States appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Admiral Nimitz to inquire into the matter and to advise him how to make freedom of opinion consistent with national safety. This is an admission by the executive department that the government has responsibilities with regard to this problem—an admission perhaps forced by Congress through its various investigating committees.

Jefferson would have said that this problem cannot be solved by process of law. In fact, he did say that no process of law is necessary. His first inaugural address proclaimed his stand in these words: "If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this union, or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it."

But that was in 1801, and since 1801 a great many things have changed, including, perhaps, the attitude of the American people. Furthermore, Jefferson did not say that error of opinion may be tolerated, and stop with that; he added, "where reason is left free to combat it," which is a condition, and a very important one. Suppress, or handicap reason, and the whole situation is altered.

For reason doesn't work like lightning. It must have time in which to operate, and if there is no time it is certainly handicapped and probably suppressed. That is what Justice Holmes meant when he said that while



freedom of speech is a right, it doesn't mean that a man has a right to shout "Fire!" in a crowded theater, for in that situation reason has no time in which to work. This great judge stated the opinion formally in 1919, when he wrote a famous dissent in the case of *Abrams v United States*, he said "I think we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death, unless they so imminently threaten immediate interference with the lawful and pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check is required to save the country."

It was on the latter part of Holmes' reasoning that Eugene V Debs was sentenced to prison in 1918 for no other crime than making speeches. There was no question that Debs, then the leader of the Socialist party, was expressing an honest opinion, but the country was at war, and his opinion was that young men should resist the draft. With war already raging, there was no time to argue about it, and Debs' speech threatened that 'immediate interference' mentioned by Holmes as overriding ordinary rules. The error of opinion could not be tolerated with safety because reason was not left free to combat it. Such, at least, was the argument of the government, and it was accepted by the Supreme Court.

Because Debs was a man of high character many people were horrified by his being thrown into jail like a common criminal, some jumped to the conclusion that his case proved that the United States had abandoned its old belief in freedom of speech. But they overlooked the fact that as early as 1801 Jefferson himself admitted that reason must be left free if error is to be tolerated safely, and in times of great emergency reason is not left free. This is, indeed, one, and not the least dreadful, of the horrors of war. Cicero said, *Inter arma silent leges*, "In time of war the laws are silent," and although lawyers have vehemently denied it ever since, experience has proved to the common man that Cicero was not all together wrong.

When he made his report to Congress in February, 1951, General Eisenhower described this as "a world in which the power of military might is still too much respected." Whenever military might is too much respected, it is a certainty that civil rights will not be enough respected. This has been our experience throughout our national history. As soon as war breaks out our concern for military success overtakes and usually overrides our concern for personal liberty. This has led us into some strange situations.

One of the most important protections of the citizen against tyranny is what lawyers call the writ of habeas corpus. Literally, the words mean "have the body," and the writ is an order issued by a judge to a sheriff, or other arresting officer, to have the body—of the arrested man—brought

before the judge at a specified time so that the judge may be satisfied that there was a good reason for the man's arrest. Before the writ existed it was possible for the king's police to arrest a subject and hold him in jail as long as they liked without bringing him to trial and giving him a chance to defend himself. Men were sometimes arrested, held in prison for years, and then released without even being charged with a crime. Obviously, then, the writ of habeas corpus is the very foundation of personal liberty, yet *inter arma*, while the Civil War was raging, President Lincoln suspended the writ, and nothing was done about it. That is one instance in which the laws were silent.

During the first World War, when German spies were wreaking havoc in American munitions plants and at ports where ships were being loaded, Congress enacted very severe laws against espionage, including under that term not only overt acts of sabotage, but also talk that tended to discourage recruiting or to destroy confidence in the government. This was a return to the old English theory that officials must be protected from criticism in order to save the whole system. It was justified on the ground that reason was not left free to combat error of opinion, and about eighteen hundred persons were prosecuted, some on very flimsy evidence.

There is hardly a doubt that people were punished unjustly under this law, but some deserved what they got. Some probably were expressing honest opinions, but some were scoundrels who were bribed by the enemy, and it is likely that fear of the terrific punishments inflicted prevented a certain number of other rascals from selling out. War is always attended by injustice. There is no justice in it when one soldier is killed while the man next to him escapes unscathed and comes home to live long and prosper. But that is the fortune of war, and the only way to put an end to it is to put an end to war.

The doctrine was stated by the same Justice Holmes in another celebrated opinion (*Schenck v. United States*, 1919). "The question in every case," he said, "is whether the words used are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent." The mere utterance of words may not be a crime, but the creation of "a clear and present danger" is a crime, whether it is brought about by acts or by words alone.

When the Supreme Court says the law is thus-and so, that makes it thus-and-so unless and until Congress changes it, or thirty-six states ratify an amendment to the Constitution. In this case Congress has not acted, nor has there been an amendment to the Constitution, so the words of Justice Holmes are the law of the land.

The question is, do they mean a change in the essential American

doctrine respecting freedom of speech? It is difficult to answer. In fact, it cannot be answered by studying either the laws passed by Congress or the decisions of the Supreme Court. In the end, it will be answered by the attitude of the American people, including you and me, for even the Supreme Court of the United States can be overruled by the people through the process of Constitutional amendment. It is a slow and difficult process, but it can be done and it has been done,<sup>5</sup> so the attitude of the people is, in the last analysis, more decisive than that of either Congress or the courts.

It must be noted that in the first case cited (*Abrams v United States*), when he urged the necessity of protecting expression of opinions "that we loathe and believe fraught with death," Holmes was writing a dissent, which is to say, he was disagreeing with the majority of the Court. Those words, therefore, are not the law, but merely the opinion of Justice Holmes. However, the opinion of a great, learned, and honest judge is not to be lightly disregarded, sometimes it comes nearer the real beliefs of the people than does the contrary opinion of the rest of the Court. In such a case, if the people hold to their belief, the time will come when the dissent will be the law, for the people, not the Court, are sovereign.

In the great court of public opinion, therefore, the dissenting opinion of Holmes in the case of *Abrams* carries just about as much weight, and is worth about as much consideration, as his concurring opinion in the case of *Schenck*. It is very much to the point to compare them both with the original doctrine, as set out in the Declaration of Independence. The doctrine there stated is simple to the last degree. when any form of government—the word is "any," not excluding our own—becomes destructive of liberty (or life, or the pursuit of happiness) it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it. You seldom alter a form of government, and you never abolish one, without force and violence, but that did not disturb the signers of the Declaration, who were then and there preparing to employ force and violence to abolish the form of government under which they were living.

In the beginning of 1776 the British colonial system was the American form of government. But in the estimation of the people it had become destructive of liberty, including freedom of speech, so they announced their determination to kill it and did kill it. Eighty five years later the Confederate States of America decided that its national safety depended upon disunion and the perpetuation of slavery, this seemed, to the rest of the American people, destructive of liberty and they deemed no government fit to live at that price. So they killed the Confederacy. In 1914 the Imperial German government appeared to threaten destruction of the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness throughout the world,

so the American people joined with other democracies to kill it. In 1941 the totalitarian Axis presented an even worse threat to those rights, so at immense cost in blood and treasure the American people helped kill it. Counting the British colonial system, the Confederacy, and the German, Austrian, Turkish, Italian, and Japanese empires we have, singly, or jointly with others, destroyed seven forms of government in pursuance of our belief that no government has a right to protect its national safety at the price of the lives, liberties, and happiness of the people. Two of these forms, incidentally, were American, and none of these wars was fought to acquire additional territory or to collect large indemnities, so it is hard to see how our people could have asserted more emphatically their belief that national safety is not the final consideration in making the laws under which we live.

The American doctrine is that a nation has no right to safety if it is tyrannous and unjust.

Once more we turn to Jefferson for a clear and exact statement of what we believed in 1801. Though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail," he said in his first inaugural, and he was speaking of the American government, no other, "that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable, the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect and to violate would be oppression." Jefferson wrote the Declaration himself, so he knew that it contained the doctrine that oppression is rightfully the death warrant of any government, a warrant which the people may execute at their pleasure. He was at that moment taking charge of the executive department of this government as President of the United States, so he was admitting that only as long as he preserved the liberties of the people did he have any right to their loyalty.

That's flat. There is no hemming and hawing, no backing and filling about it. The government that becomes destructive of liberty is itself lawfully open to destruction, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it.

Arguing from that standpoint alone one might easily infer that when the American government of 1951 jails a Communist not for anything he has done, but only for what he has said or written, it becomes destructive of liberty and forfeits its right to the allegiance of the people.

But there is that matter of reason being left free to combat error, mentioned in the same speech. There is that matter of clear and present danger at this moment embodied in the law of the land. A principle of government may be as clear as crystal, yet when it comes to applying that principle to a specific case, circumstances arise to cloud and obscure the business and touch off endless debate.

This point is also to be noted: the "clear and present danger" to which

Holmes referred, is not a clear and present danger that the Communists, for instance, may win a majority to their way of thinking. The government has no right to prevent that, or even to try to prevent it. The clear and present danger must be danger that Communist talk will hinder Congress in doing what Congress has an unquestioned right to do.

So it all comes down to an estimation of the nature and extent of the danger. That estimate will rise in proportion as our fears rise, and will subside as our fears subside. If Tito's Yugoslavia were the only Communist country in the world, we should laugh at any attempt to pass special laws to prevent the preaching of communism in this country. There would be no clear and present danger, hence no excuse for interfering with the utmost freedom of speech. It is because Russia, a very powerful nation, and China, an immense nation, are both Communist that we admit the existence of peril whose magnitude justifies some limitation of expression of opinion.

The fact is that how free we can afford to be depends upon how scared we are. If we are not scared at all, we can be as free as the Declaration of Independence asserted we should be. If we are somewhat scared, but nevertheless resolute—as the men who signed the Declaration were—we can still be free beyond anything possible in a nation frightened into hysteria.

The American doctrine was devised by brave men for brave men. If the men are still brave, the doctrine may be still good. But not otherwise

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The two that were rejected related, one to apportionment of representatives, the other to compensation of members, neither having any relation to individual liberty. Thus it seems that even as early as 1789 smart politicians saw the advantage of using a popular movement to put over ideas having nothing to do with it. In this case they succeeded with Congress but failed with the States.

<sup>2</sup> The extent to which we have forgotten what our government is really like is indicated by the fact that some otherwise intelligent people are only vaguely aware that every State has a constitution of its own into which it can write anything not specifically forbidden in the Federal Constitution or usurping the powers of the Federal government. The Constitution of the United States and treaties made under it are the supreme law of the land, but not the only law, and it is the Bill of Rights in his State constitution that is the chief protection of the citizen.

<sup>3</sup> Some excellent lawyers believe, however, that the Supreme Court could and would do a great deal about it if any State undertook to establish an official church. But since none has ever tried, it is what the law calls a moot question.

<sup>4</sup> Nimitz and most of the commissioners resigned when Congress refused to give them what they regarded as a free hand in conducting their investigation. The affair had become involved in partisan and factional politics.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, the Dred Scott decision, allowing Negro slaves to be

transported into free States and the decision holding the income tax unconstitutional were both rendered invalid by Constitutional amendment.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 How does Johnson distinguish between freedom of body and freedom of thought?
- 2 What is the reason for his lengthy analysis of American history in the 18th century? What is its pertinence today?
- 3 Describe the early struggle in America for freedom of speech.
- 4 What is meant by "clear and present danger"? How must the doctrine be applied?
- 5 What reasons does Johnson give for America going to war on several occasions? Would such reasons apply today?
- 6 What is the meaning of the title of the essay?
- 7 This essay is somewhat persuasive. Analyze the basic argument.

### FOR DISCUSSION

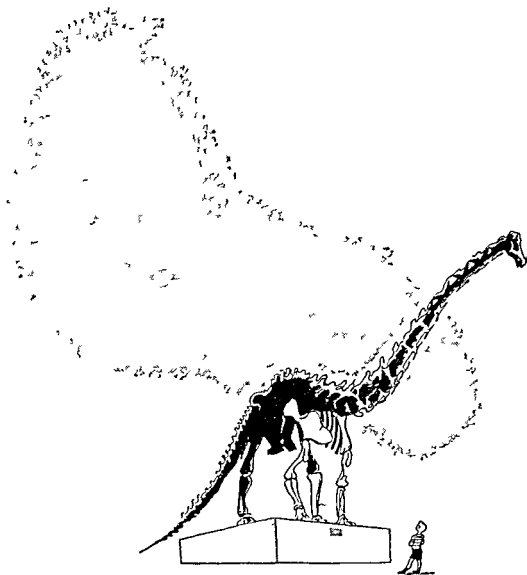
- 1 What factors, if any, inhibit the freedom of the press today?
- 2 What evidence do you find of freedom of speech being curtailed (or not being curtailed) in America today?
- 3 Why must freedom be for brave men? What are risks of freedom of speech?
- 4 How can we guarantee that reason be free to combat error?
- 5 What are the arguments for and against the invoking of the Fifth Amendment during investigations?
- 6 What justifications are there for curbing free speech in war time? During a "cold" war?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 John Stuart Mill on freedom of speech
- 2 I would not (or would) allow a Communist (or Socialist or Fascist) to teach
- 3 Free Speech in the classroom
- 4 When censorship is necessary
- 5 Every man is entitled to his own opinion.
- 6 The founding fathers are (or are not) out of date

## Chapter Nine

# The Scientific Study of Man



THE GLORY, JEST, AND RIDDLE OF THE WORLD

ALEXANDER POPE



## Introduction

The serious study of man and his relation to the world in which he finds himself, which for most of human history has been undertaken primarily by writers of literature, religion, theology, and philosophy, has in recent decades attracted the natural scientists. A number of anthropologists, biologists, and sociologists are now concerned with applying scientific techniques to the study of man as an animal with a biological history and man as a creature living in a particular social community which has particular social patterns.

Later chapters, and especially those dealing with "Courtship, Marriage, and the Family," "Maturity," and "Emotional Health and Good Personal Relations," will show various other ways in which psychologists and psychiatrists have been applying scientific techniques to the study of the minds and behavior patterns of men and women. The present chapter presents one article by a biologist and two articles by anthropologists which approach the study of man from the point of view of natural science. The fourth article, by a geneticist, points out certain limitations and roots of discord in this approach.

Ernest A. Hooton, who was a famous Harvard anthropologist, writes on man as "The Upstart of the Animal Kingdom." We need, he seems to say, have no illusions about our ancestry. Man is closely related to the rest of the animal kingdom. No doubt he is the finest flower of evolution as far as we know it, but he is still an animal, a result of adaptation to environment. Such facts, Hooton points out, should help to keep us humble.

Julian Huxley, English biologist and writer on scientific matters, says in "Man as a Relative Being" that from the standpoint of biology man is made of the same materials as the rest of the universe combined by evolution into a mechanism in many ways admirably designed for living on the earth. Beyond other animals, however, man has developed mind, a way of dealing consciously with the universe instead of reacting mechanically to it.

Man is indeed infinitely various and in his different manifestations a more than sufficient subject for a lifetime of study. Viewed physically he is a creature of his environment and his adaptation to it, viewed

anthropologically he is a creature of his culture Ruth Benedict, who until her death in 1948 was Professor of Anthropology at Columbia and a well known writer in her field, discusses man as a creature of his culture patterns in the third article in this chapter, "The Individual and the Patterns of Culture" Just as he is physically, at least in part, a reaction to his physical environment, so he is mentally, at least in part, a reaction to the climate of ideas into which he is born Whether he accepts or rejects these ideas determines his acceptance or rejection by society and often his own conception of himself The idea of normality is involved, with often grave consequences to the mental health of individuals Perhaps we could make our society a better home for man if we recognized how much he is molded by the culture into which he is born

The belief persists and develops, however, that man is more than an animal who has been made by his environment, physical or cultural Edmund W Sinnott, author of the last article in this section, 'How to Live in Two Worlds,' is a geneticist, sometime Dean of the Graduate School at Yale, who is interested in finding some position intermediate between man as ape and man as angel which will make it possible for human beings to unite The Communists, he thinks, are united on the wrong premises The West has failed to erect any satisfactory philosophical system based on the true nature of man both as animal and as spirit Accepting all that science can tell us about ourselves, he insists that by itself it is an incomplete explanation We need the religious and the spiritual as well We must learn to 'live in two worlds'

Sinnott points up one of the fundamental problems which arise in almost any discussion of the nature of man Is he something special? Or is what we think special about him merely what we have not succeeded in explaining? If scientific knowledge continues to progress, will Sinnott's realm of the spirit join the realm of the animal? Or will the realm of the animal be seen more clearly as related to the realm of the spirit? Whatever be the answer, our idea of the nature of man will affect very seriously our whole attitude toward life

## EARNEST A. HOOTON

(1887-1954) was Professor of Anthropology at Harvard from 1930 to the time of his death. He wrote scientific papers and books on anthropology, among the latter were *Why Men Behave Like Apes* and *Vice Versa* and *Man's Poor Relations*. [The original version of this article appeared in the *American Scholar*, Vol. VI No. 3, the present version first appeared in Harlow Shapley et al. *A Treasury of Science*, published by Harper and Brothers, 1946.]

### *The Upstart of the Animal Kingdom*

The principal public function of the anthropologist is to instill into man a proper humility, by reminding him of his humble origin and by demonstrating to him how short a distance he has come from his lower mammalian forbears and in how prodigiously long a time.

Through the long middle ages of life on the earth multifarious reptiles had dominated the scene—aquatic, aerial, and terrestrial, herbivorous and carnivorous, tiny and gigantic, but generally slimy. I think that by the end of the Mesozoic Age nature had grown tired of dinosaurs—fed up with their eggs—and felt ready for a leadership of brains. Throughout this period there had been lying low, or rather sitting high in the tree tops, some little long snouted insectivores who reproduced their young in higher mammalian fashion and suckled them at the breast instead of laying eggs *passim* like reptiles. In the fullness of time and at the beginning of the Paleocene, perhaps sixty million years ago, there sprang from this order of insectivores the first primitive primates, called lemurs.

These early lemurs were animals of small pretensions and apparently slight evolutionary promise. They had longish snouts, laterally directed eyes and very modest brains but they possessed the most precious of animal endowments, adaptability. This adaptability is essentially the faculty of grasping an environmental opportunity and following, not the line of least resistance but that of greatest opportunity. Literally and corporeally this ability to grasp an object and a situation was centered in the prehensile pentadactyle hands and feet, equipped with flat nails instead of claws and with thumbs and great toes which could be opposed to the other digits. These sensitive members could encircle a bough, pluck a leaf, pick a flea or convey an edible object to the eyes for examination, to the snout for smelling and to the mouth for tasting. These hands and feet were not only prehensile but also tactile organs which enabled their small tree-dwelling owners to explore the world and to become conscious of the various parts of their own bodies inaccessible to most quadrupeds. Their

greatest importance was not in being conveyors merely of food to the mouth but rather of messages to the brain, which now began to be something more than a sensory receptacle and a coordinator of muscular movements. The lemur brain began to record associations, to register visual and tactile impressions and to allocate to specific areas of its nervous cortex definite functions—motor, sensory and associative. In short, these lemurs began really to exercise their brains and to manifest intelligence. The hands called to the brain and the latter responded, assuming the function of direction and guidance.

Let us pause for a few moments to consider the advantages of arboreal life to a small and weak animal. A tiny terrestrial animal has to depend largely upon its sense of smell to warn it of the approach of enemies and to enable it to find food. Its visual sense is of comparatively slight utility because its horizon is restricted by its nearness to the ground. It lives in a world of tall grass and underbrush. It "noses its way through life." Now suppose this small animal climbs a tree. It gets up out of the wet and away from the clutch of enemies, it has a chance to sit up and look around. Arboreal life puts a premium upon the visual sense and the olfactory function diminishes in importance. The animal begins to look for its food rather than to sniff for it. Agility and motor coordination are essential for moving about in the trees and avoiding falls. On the whole no nursery school could be more ideal for a small mammal with prehensile extremities. The original equipment of five-digitated hands and feet with opposable thumbs and great toes allowed the animal to grasp an object of whatever shape and size and the absence of protrusive claws encouraged the use of the finger bulbs for tactile discrimination.

The dietary afforded by the tropic forest was varied and stimulated an omnivorous habit—extremely useful for evolutionary survival as anyone who has lived in a boarding house should know. Nuts, fruits, berries, leaves and shoots for salads, birds' eggs, grubs and even birds themselves if these could be caught—here were plenty of vitamins, and sufficient sunlight was handy for those disposed to climb to the top of the trees.

Parental care, too, was necessitated by the arboreal habitat since the young of mammals are relatively helpless. Those secondarily adapted for arboreal life must be reared in a nest or carried on their mothers' bodies until they attain the strength, agility and experience to pursue their precarious aerial lives.

Nature then had provided these primitive lemurine primates with a bodily equipment suitable for arboreal life, and necessity, or less probably choice, had driven them into the trees. Here was offered, to those who could grasp it, the educational opportunity for evolutionary advancement. Now the most mystifying feature of evolution and of modern

human life is the variation of individuals in their capacity to utilize opportunities. Why do some people absorb and assimilate an education and others merely excrete it? The arboreal habitat for some of these early primates was a catalytic agent for evolutionary progress and for others merely a lotus eating existence. Students of organic evolution dismiss the question by asserting that some animals are progressive and adaptive whereas others are conservative and rigid. As a matter of fact the secret of progress appears to be the ability of the animal to utilize the advantages of an environment without molding its organism too narrowly to the requirements of any particular mode of life. The really progressive animal must if possible adapt environment to itself and not become too malleable to its influence. It must maintain its organic independence, it must possess a certain initiative whereby it picks and chooses, and when choice is narrowed to its extreme disadvantage it needs to move on in search of better things. There are today, of course, plenty of lemurs in Madagascar, Africa, and Indonesia, and they are probably very little changed from their original proto-primate status in bodily form and in habits. These, however, are the stultified and backward children of the Order—the perennial kindergarteners.

Practically contemporary with the early lemurs, possibly an offshoot from some gifted lemuroid stock, were other and more precocious primates, the tarsoids. To see what they were like we have had to study their few relatively unmodified modern descendants, confined to the islands of Indonesia. These tarsoids differed from the lemurs in a number of significant and promising features and habits. First, instead of running on all fours through the trees they hopped on their hind legs. An animal which has to use all four limbs for locomotion and support is necessarily dependent upon its snout for tactile and feeding purposes, but these little arboreal tarsoids have "emancipated their fore limbs" for purposes of prehension, exploration and hand feeding. Release from the function of bough-gripping foreshadowed tool using, tool-making and the ultimate genesis of material culture. Further, the hopping tarsier sits up and looks around, it carries the long axis of its body perpendicular to the ground instead of parallel with it. It takes a vertical rather than a horizontal view of life.

It is a principle of Nature that organs increase in size when their functions are enlarged and atrophy when their activity is diminished. In the tarsoids there took place an elongation of the tarsus (that portion of the foot which supports the hopping animal). Far more important, however, were changes in the face, the brain case and the brain itself, associated with the upright sitting posture and the freedom of the fore-limbs. For an animal largely dependent upon its olfactory sense, the snout, terminating

in a moist muzzle or rhinarium, not only serves as the principal tactile organ, it also collects the scents and odors by which the animal's existence is guided. Furthermore the snout includes inferiorly the jaws, the incisive front ends of which are projected forward of the eyes in order that the animal can graze and still see what it is eating and what is going on around it. But with the free use of prehensile hands as organs of touch and conveyors of food a projecting snout loses its function. Thus we find the snout greatly shortened in the tarsier. Furthermore, the visual sense in this animal has become wholly dominant over the olfactory. The brain has swollen enormously and particularly those portions of the cortex or nervous covering in which vision is represented, the neopallium, or new cloak of the brain, has spread like a tent over the primitive olfactory bulbs, covering, obscuring and dwarfing them. To accommodate this larger brain the skull has grown backward so that now it nearly balances upon the vertical spinal column. The tarsier can hold up its head without straining the neck muscles with the weight of the thrust-out and overbalancing snout.

Lemurs and lower mammals have eyes laterally directed on each side of a protrusive snout. They see with one eye at a time and the fields of vision do not overlap. Such wall-eyed brutes lack stereoscopic vision whereby the eyes can focus simultaneously upon the same object and without which there can be no depth of perception and but little perspective. The tarsier, in contrast, has formed the habit of holding objects in front of its eyes for examination. Whether for this reason or another, its eyes have tended to swivel forward toward the frontal plane so that their axes of vision are less divergent although not yet parallel. Probably the fields of vision overlap to some extent but true stereoscopic sight has not yet been realized. Moreover this little animal displays certain anatomical precocities of the reproductive system which foreshadow the higher primates and determines the consensus of zoological opinion that monkeys, apes and even man must own some progressive Eocene form of this arboreal hopper as their ultimate primate ancestor.

It would have taken a zoologist gifted with extraordinary evolutionary foresight to predict from the generalized Eocene tarsiods the final emergence of *Homo*. But if we move on to the Oligocene period, not more than thirty five millions of years ago, we find in the dried up lake bed of the Fayum west of the Nile ample evidence of the great evolutionary strides which the primates had taken in their first quarter of a hundred million years. Primitive and generalized Old World monkeys appear—and from a tarsiod to a monkey is a bigger jump than from an ape to a man. The monkeys have much larger and better developed brains than tarsiods. Instead of being smooth and probably devoid of well defined

association areas, the surface of the cerebral hemispheres, or forebrain, is now wrinkled or convoluted, affording more nervous cortical surface. The occipital lobes of the forebrain in monkeys overhang the hind brain or cerebellum, which in the tarsiers is naked and exposed. The greatest expansion in the monkey brain has occurred in the so called association areas, especially in the frontal and parietal regions. The visual and general sensory areas are now widely separated and well differentiated. Binocular or stereoscopic vision exists, there is an advanced method of intra-uterine nourishment of the young, without doubt there are enhanced mental faculties such as better memory, clearer association of ideas, intensified emotional activity, more acute tactile discrimination and sharper attention—above all, perhaps, the genesis of a certain curiosity, a tendency to poke into and investigate things. The faculty which makes a monkey mischievous is precisely that which in man has created something unique in the world of life—a material culture. It manifests itself in lower primate forms in an irresistible inclination to pull things apart, in man it puts things together. The monkey uses his agile fingers and his restless brain in play, man puts them to work.

We know little of these Oligocene monkeys except that they were small, primitive and generalized ancestors of the simian troops which people the forests of Asia and Africa today. However, just as the precocious tarsier appears in the same Eocene deposits with the less advanced lemur, so in the Oligocene beds of the Fayum the first tiny anthropoid ape is a contemporary of the ancestral Old World Monkey. The rise of this small ape was the second greatest achievement of organic evolution—the explicit promise of a reasoning animal which should create a civilization. There remains of *Propliopithecus*, ape of the dawn, only the half of a lower jaw and some teeth but these bespeak incontrovertibly a form which must have stood at the very point of divergence of the anthropoid-humanoid stock from that of the monkeys.

You may inquire how paleontologists and zoologists are able to trace descent through teeth, which seem small and inadequate pegs upon which to hang whole genealogies. The expert upon fossil remains has to work with those parts of the body which best resist the attacks of time. In most animals these happen to be the teeth and the lower jaws—relatively tough and indigestible morsels which no beast of prey can stomach. The teeth are composed of dentine, coated on the crowns and necks with hard enamel, and they normally outlast all other skeletal parts. One of the most sinister signs of degression in civilized man is that he holds the undesirably unique position of being the only animal whose teeth commonly decay so early in life that his open mouth reveals a charnel house—an inadequately whitened sepulchre of rotting dentition.

The number and kind of teeth and the details of their cusp pattern have been found to be the most reliable criteria of relationship which comparative anatomy affords. Not only does the architecture of the teeth furnish a substantial clue as to the diet of the owner, it also indicates his descent. Thus the molar teeth of the little *Propliopithecus* show substantially the same five-cusped pattern as those of later fossil anthropoids, the present great apes and man. That is about all we know of *Propliopithecus* except that he stands closer to the line of the modern gibbon than to that of the giant primates which ultimately gave rise to man, gorilla, chimpanzee and orang utan. We may, however, postulate that this common ancestor of apes and man had a much larger brain relative to his body size than any existing monkey although in actual bulk he could have been no longer than a human suckling. It is probable also that *Propliopithecus* was an arboreal brachiator—i.e. he moved about the trees by taking long swings with his arms, the body suspended in an upright position and the legs trailing in the air. This brachiating habit with consequent elongation of the arms, is characteristic of all existing anthropoid apes and there are ample traces of its former presence in the ancestral line of man. With it developed the vertical suspension of the viscera by means of sheets of membrane which hold the organs in place and prevent them from slumping into the pelvic cavity when the trunk is upright. Such suspension is a prerequisite for the biped erect posture on the ground, afterwards adopted by the hominids. *Propliopithecus* still lived on a generalized and mainly frugivorous diet such as the trees of the tropical forest afford, he was no predatory carnivore.

Our next glimpse of primate evolution is at the beginning of the Miocene period, perhaps nineteen million years ago. By this time the Old World monkeys are well developed and the anthropoid ape line has differentiated a full fledged gibbon and the first of the generalized giant apes. The present gibbons are restricted to the southeastern portion of Asia and adjacent islands of the Indonesian archipelago. They are small arboreal anthropoids standing about three feet in height and very slender in build. With their prodigious arms (so long that they touch the ground when the animal stands erect) they swing from bough to bough and from tree to tree, easily clearing spaces of twenty to thirty feet. Like monkeys and tarsiers they produce only one offspring at a birth and take very good care of that single infant. When on the ground they run on their hind legs, keeping the knees bent and holding their arms aloft like a sprinter about to breast the tape. They have big and complicated brains, somewhat projecting jaws with long, sabre-like teeth, elongated and slender hands and feet with opposable thumbs and great



toes The Miocene gibbons were somewhat less specialized than those of the present day but were otherwise substantially like them

Much more important are the remains of the generalized giant anthropoid apes of the Lower and Middle Miocene, which are often lumped together into one big group—the *Dryopithecus* family The earliest of these apes appear on the Mediterranean edge of the Libyan desert but later they are distributed through Europe and along the southern foothills of the Himalayas, in the Siwalik deposits These anthropoids are represented for the most part by isolated teeth and fragments of mandibles, with an occasional long bone From these bits, however, it may be inferred that there were many genera and species—some already clearly ancestral to the orang utan (the giant ape of Borneo and Sumatra), some showing dental features foreshadowing the African apes, the gorilla and the chimpanzee, and others displaying dentitions that make them possible ancestors of man

Meanwhile what of man? It is generally postulated that his separation from the common anthropoid humanoid stock occurred at least as early as the middle of the Miocene period—at a guess, thirteen million years ago A strong body of opinion, in which I do not concur, would even go so far as to derive the humanoid line from a small ground ape which diverged from the anthropoid stocks back in the Oligocene, before there were any giant primates This view is unacceptable to me because man bears in his molar teeth the pattern of his *Dryopithecus* heritage and because he manifests more numerous and detailed resemblances to the present great African apes than can be explained plausibly by convergence or by such a remote relationship as is implied in the theory of the small Oligocene ground ape ancestor

Geologists generally agree that the uplifting of the Central Asiatic plateau and the formation of the Himalayas and other encircling mountain chains occurred in the Miocene period According to one theory this uplift was accompanied by a desiccation and deforestation of the elevated regions which left the ancestral generalized anthropoids under the necessity of migrating to some area where the forests were intact or of taking to the ground Whether our ancestors made a virtue of a necessity by adopting a terrestrial life because there were no more trees or whether they took a chance on the ground out of sheer initiative can be argued but not proved It may be noted that arboreal life so advantageous for small primates, becomes a very cramping and precarious existence when an animal attains the body bulk of man and the great anthropoid apes Firstly, the struggle against gravity increases with increments of weight The orang utan or gorilla is forced to keep to the larger boughs and the trunks of the trees and cannot flip lightly from the

of the skull rose like an inflated bladder, bulged laterally and protruded posteriorly into a bun-shaped occiput. . . .

During the Pliocene period, which lasted at least six million years and terminated with the onset of the glacial epoch, perhaps a million years B.C., it seems certain that our ancestors, who now deserved the name of man, flourished like the green bay tree. Unfortunately we have as yet no skeletal remains of human beings which can be attributed with certainty to this early period. We know, however, that before its close man had already begun to make stone implements, somewhat crude and amorphous but definitely recognizable as human artifacts. The elements of material culture had been formed. Social organization may well have existed. Anatomical evidence suggests that a number of different physical types of man were present, some more apelike than others but all essentially human, and that several of the types were possessed of such ability to dominate their physical environments as to ensure survival through the rigors of the ensuing glacial epoch.

The million-year Pleistocene or glacial period witnessed four advances of the ice sheets with three genial climatic intervals of varying duration in terms of scores of thousands of years. Throughout this whole period we have nearly continuous records of man's stone work in the gravel deposits laid down by rivers and in the inhabited caves. Flint-working evolved slowly to a pitch of skill which can be appreciated only if one attempts to produce similar tools from the same refractory material.

Geological deposits of the earlier and middle portions of the Pleistocene have yielded occasional skeletal remains of man, for the most part fragmentary, but enormously instructive. All these men seem to have been erect walkers, with feet fully adapted for support. Some had rather small brains, low foreheads, great bars of bone above the eye sockets, protrusive jaws and receding chins. Such anatomical reminders of ape ancestry did not prevent them from fabricating a great variety of stone tools, efficient and, in many cases, symmetrical to the point of beauty. Low brows did not preclude the clear development of family life around the hearth of cave habitations, or the reverent burial of the dead, with funeral gifts that suggest belief in a future life. At least one of these Early Pleistocene beings, the Piltdown Lady of England, had a noble forehead and a brain of modern size.

Before the end of the glacial period, perhaps 25,000 years ago, anatomically modern types of men were dwelling in the caves of Europe and were decorating the walls of their abodes with realistic polychrome frescoes of the animals they hunted. These men of the Old Stone Age also carved statuettes of their lady friends or their mother goddesses—rather frank representations of Rubensian females. They had invented a num-

ber of skillful devices used in fishing and hunting. They were almost civilized and altogether human.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What principle does Hooton suggest as the most important one to explain how animal species advanced to higher forms?
2. What are the main types of animals in the line of development leading to man?
3. What characteristics of each type of animal does Hooton think were most important for further evolution?
4. How did the development of hands and feet affect the development of the brain?
5. Point out the basic structure around which this essay is organized.
6. By what means does Hooton develop each section of the essay?
7. How is unity achieved in this essay? Does the first sentence contribute to a unified effect?
8. Find at least two places in which Hooton shows his awareness of the reader's need for special information. How are these places indicated?
9. For what kind of readers is this essay written? Upon what evidence do you base your opinion?
10. Does the author do anything to make his statements authoritative?

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Hooton often describes evolutionary changes by such expressions as "the whole vault of the skull rose." What is he really describing in such expressions? In what ways are they useful as means of description?
2. Hooton says at the beginning of his article: "The principal public function of the anthropologist is to instill into man a proper humility." What does he mean? How is this to be done?
3. It used to be said that man's ability to think was the chief mark that distinguished him from the lower animals. Does this criterion still hold good?
4. What are the essential characteristics of "civilization"?
5. It is said that the Piltdown Lady referred to in the next to the last paragraph has been proved a hoax. How far does this fact affect Hooton's basic argument?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. A definition of evolution.
2. The advantages and dangers of "adaptability."
3. Why some people object to being told that man is descended from lower animals.
4. Why I should (or should not) like to be an anthropologist.

## JULIAN HUXLEY

born 1887 English author and biologist was Executive Secretary of the UNESCO Preparatory Committee 1946 and Director General of UNESCO 1947-48 He has been a teacher at several English institutions and has written extensively His latest book is *The Evolutionary Process* [From *Science in the Changing World* by Julian Huxley published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd]

### *Man as a Relative Being*

During the present century we have heard so much of the revolutionary discoveries of modern physics that we are apt to forget how great has been the change in the outlook due to biology Yet in some respects this has been the more important For it is affecting the way we think and act in our everyday existence Without the discoveries and ideas of Darwin and the other great pioneers in the biological field, from Mendel to Freud, we should all be different from what we are The discoveries of physics and chemistry have given us an enormous control over lifeless matter and have provided us with a host of new machines and conveniences, and this certainly has reacted on our general attitude They have also provided us with a new outlook on the universe at large our ideas about time and space, matter and creation, and our own position in the general scheme of things, are very different from the ideas of our grandfathers

Biology is beginning to provide us with control over living matter—new drugs, new methods for fighting disease, new kinds of animals and plants It is helping us also to a new intellectual outlook, in which man is seen not as a finished being, single lord of creation, but as one among millions of the products of an evolution that is still in progress But it is doing something more It is actually making us different in our natures and our biological behaviour I will take but three examples

The application of the discoveries of medicine and physiology is making us healthier and a healthy man behaves and thinks differently from one who is not so healthy Then the discoveries of modern psychology have been altering our mental and emotional life, and our system of education taken in the mass, the young people now growing up feel differently, and will therefore act differently, about such vital matters as sex and marriage, about jealousy, about freedom of expression, about the relation between parents and children And as a third example, as a race we are changing our reproductive habits the idea and the practice of deliberate birth-control has led to fewer children People living in a

country of small families and a stationary or decreasing population will in many respects be different from people in a country of large families and an increasing population

This change has not been due to any very radical new discoveries made during the present century. It has been due chiefly to discoveries which were first made in the previous century, and are at last beginning to exert a wide effect. These older discoveries fall under two chief heads. One is Evolution—the discovery that all living things, including ourselves, are the product of a slow process of development which has been brought about by natural forces, just as surely as has to-day's weather or last month's high tides. The other is the sum of an enormous number of separate discoveries which we may call physiological, and which boil down to this: that all living things, again including ourselves, work according to regular laws, in just the same way as do non-living things, except that living things are much more complicated. The old idea of 'vital force' has been driven back and back until there is hardly any process of life where it can still find any foothold. Looked at objectively and scientifically, a man is an exceedingly complex piece of chemical machinery. This does not mean that he cannot quite legitimately be looked at from other points of view—subjectively, for instance, what it means is that so far as it goes, this scientific point of view is true and not the point of view which ascribed human activities to the working of a vital force quite different from the forces at work in matter which was not alive.

Imagine a group of scientists from another planet, creatures with quite a different nature from ours, who had been dispassionately studying the curious objects called human beings for a number of years. They would not be concerned about what we men felt we were or what we would like to be, but only about getting an objective view of what we actually were and why we were what we were. It is that sort of picture which I want to draw for you. Our Martian scientists would have to consider us from three main viewpoints if they were to understand much about us. First they would have to understand our physical construction, and what meaning it had in relation to the world around and the work we have to do in it. Secondly, they would have to pay attention to our development and our history. And thirdly, they would have to study the construction and working of our minds. Any one of these three aspects by itself would give a very incomplete picture of us.

An ordinary human being is a lump of matter weighing between 50 and 100 kilograms. This living matter is the same matter of which the rest of the earth, the sun, and even the most distant stars and nebulae are made. Some elements which make up a large proportion of living matter, like

hydrogen and especially carbon, are rare in the non-living parts of the earth, and others which are abundant in the earth are, like iron, present only in traces in living creatures, or altogether absent, like aluminum or silicon. None the less, it is the same matter. The chief difference between living and non living matter is the complication of living matter. Its elements are built up into molecules much bigger and more elaborate than any other known, often containing more than a thousand atoms each. And of course, living matter has the property of self reproduction, when supplied with the right materials and in the right conditions, it can build up matter which is not living into its own complicated patterns.

Life, in fact, from the 'public' standpoint, which Professor Levy has stressed as being the only possible standpoint for science, is simply the name for the various distinctive properties of a particular group of very complex chemical compounds. The most important of these properties are, first, feeding, assimilation, growth, and reproduction, which are all aspects of the one quality of self-reproduction, next, the capacity for reacting to a number of kinds of changes in the world outside—to stimuli, such as light, heat, pressure, and chemical change, then the capacity for liberating energy in response to these stimuli, so as to react back again upon the outer world—whether by moving about, by constructing things, by discharging chemical products, or by generating light or heat, and finally the property of variation. Self reproduction is not always precisely accurate, and the new substance is a little different from the parent substance which produced it.

The existence of self reproduction on the one hand and variation on the other automatically leads to what Darwin called "natural selection." This is a sifting process, by which the different new variations are tested out against the conditions of their existence, and in which some succeed better than others in surviving and in leaving descendants. This blind process slowly but inevitably causes living matter to change—in other words, it leads to evolution. There may be other agencies at work in guiding the course of evolution, but it seems certain that natural selection is the most important.

The results it produces are roughly as follows. It *adapts* any particular stream of living matter more or less completely to the conditions in which it lives. As there are innumerable different sets of conditions to which life can be adapted, this has led to an increasing diversity of life, a splitting of living matter into an increasing number of separate streams. The final tiny streams we call species, there are perhaps a million of them now in existence. This adaptation is progressive, any one stream of life is forced to grow gradually better and better adapted to some particular condition of life. We can often see this in the fossil records of past life.

For instance, the early ancestors of lions and horses about 50 million years ago were not very unlike, but with the passage of time one line grew better adapted to grass eating and running away from enemies. And finally natural selection leads to general progress, there is a gradual rising of the highest level attained by life. The most advanced animals are those which have changed their way of life and adapted themselves to new conditions, thus taking advantages of biological territory hitherto unoccupied. The most obvious example of this was the invasion of the land. Originally all living things were confined to life in water, and it was not for hundreds of millions of years after the first origin of life that plants and animals managed to colonize dry land.

But progress can also consist in taking better advantage of existing conditions. For instance, the mammal's biological inventions, of warm blood and of nourishing the unborn young within the mother's body, put them at an advantage over other inhabitants of the land, and the increase in size of brain which is man's chief characteristic has enabled him to control and exploit his environment in a new and more effective way, from which his pre-human ancestors were debarred.

It follows from this that all animals and plants that are at all highly developed have a long and chequered history behind them, and that their present can often not be properly understood without an understanding of their past. For instance, the tiny hairs all over our own bodies are a reminder of the fact that we are descended from furry creatures, and have no significance except as a survival.

Let us now try to get some picture of man in the light of these ideas. The continuous stream of life that we call the human race is broken up into separate bits which we call individuals. This is true of all higher animals, but is not necessary. It is a convenience. Living matter has to deal with two sets of activities: one concerns its immediate relations with the world outside it, the other concerns its future perpetuation. What we call an individual is an arrangement permitting a stream of living matter to deal more effectively with its environment. After a time it is discarded and dies. But within itself it contains a reserve of potentially immortal substance, which it can hand on to future generations, to produce new individuals like itself. Thus from one aspect the individual is only the casket of the continuing race, but from another the achievements of the race depend on the construction of its separate individuals.

The human individual is large as animal individuals go. Size is an advantage if life is not to be at the mercy of small changes in the outer world. For instance, a man the size of a beetle could not manage to keep his temperature constant. Size also goes with long life: and a man who only lived as long as a fly could not learn much. But there is a limit to

size, a land animal much bigger than an elephant is not, mechanically speaking, a practical proposition. Man is in that range of size, from 100 lb to a ton, which seems to give the best combination of strength, and mobility. It may be surprising to realize that man's size and mechanical construction are related to the size of the earth which he inhabits, but so it is. The force of gravity on Jupiter is so much greater than on our own planet, that if we lived there our skeletons would have to be much stronger to support the much increased weight which we would then possess, and animals in general would be more stocky, and conversely if the earth were only the size of the moon, we could manage with far less expenditures of material in the form of bone and sinew, and should be spindly creatures.

Our general construction is determined by the fact that we are made of living matter, must accordingly be constantly passing a stream of fresh matter and energy through ourselves if we are to live, and must as constantly be guarding ourselves against danger if we are not to die. About 5 per cent of ourselves consists of a tube with attached chemical factories, for taking in raw materials in the shape of food, and converting it into the form in which it can be absorbed into our real interior. About 2 per cent consists in arrangements—windpipe and lungs—for getting oxygen into our system in order to burn the food materials and liberate energy. About 10 per cent consists of an arrangement for distributing materials all over the body—the blood and lymph, the tubes which hold them and the pump which drives them. Much less than 5 per cent is devoted to dealing with waste materials produced when living substance breaks down in the process of producing energy to keep our machinery going—the kidneys and bladder and, in part, the lungs and skin. Over 40 per cent is machinery for moving us about—our muscles, and nearly 20 per cent is needed to support us and to give the mechanical leverage for our movements—our skeleton and sinews. A relatively tiny fraction is set apart for giving us information about the outer world—our sense organs. And there is about 3 per cent to deal with the difficult business of adjusting our behaviour to what is happening around us. This is the task of the ductless glands, the nerves, the spinal cord and the brain, our conscious feeling and thinking is done by a small part of the brain. Less than 1 per cent of our bodies is set aside for reproducing the race. The remainder of our body is concerned with special functions like protection, carried out by the skin (which is about 7 per cent of our bulk) and some of the white blood corpuscles, or temperature regulations, carried out by the sweat glands. And nearly 10 per cent of a normal man consists of reserve food stores in the shape of fat.

Other streams of living matter have developed quite other arrange



ments in relation to their special environment. Some have parts of themselves set aside for manufacturing electricity, like the electric eel, or light, like the firefly. Some, like certain termites, are adapted to live exclusively on wood, others, like cows, exclusively on vegetables. Some like boa constrictors, only need to eat every few months, others, like parasitic worms, need only breathe a few hours a day, others, like some desert gazelles, need no water to drink. Many cave animals have no eyes, tapeworms have no mouths or stomachs, and so on and so forth. And all these peculiarities, including those of our own construction, are related to the kind of surroundings in which the animal lives.

This relativity of our nature is perhaps most clearly seen in regard to our senses. The ordinary man is accustomed to think of the information given by his senses as absolute. So it is—for him, but not in the view of our Martian scientist. To start with, the particular senses we possess are not shared by many other creatures. Outside backboneed animals, for instance, very few creatures can hear at all, a few insects and perhaps a few crustacea probably exhaust the list. Even fewer animals can see colours, apparently the world as seen even by most mammals is a black and white world, not a coloured world. And the majority of animals do not even see at all in the sense of being given a detailed picture of the world around. Either they merely distinguish light from darkness, or at best can get a blurred image of big moving objects. On the other hand, we are much worse off than many other creatures—dogs, for instance, or some moths—in regard to smell. Our sense of smell is to a dog's what an eye capable of just distinguishing big moving objects is to our own eye.

But from another aspect, the relativity of our senses is even more fundamental. Our senses serve to give us information about changes outside our bodies. Well, what kind of changes are going on in the outside world? There are ordinary mechanical changes—matter can press against us, whether in the form of a gentle breeze or a blow from a poker. There are the special mechanical changes due to vibrations passing through the air or water around us—these are what we hear. There are changes in temperature—hot and cold. There are chemical changes—the kind of matter with which we are in contact alters—as when the air contains poison gas, or our mouth contains lemonade. There are electrical changes, as when a current is sent through a wire we happen to be touching.

And there are all the changes depending on what used to be called vibrations in the ether. The most familiar of these are light-waves, but they range from the extremely short waves that give cosmic rays and X rays, down through ultra violet to visible light, on to waves of radiant

heat, and so on to the very long Hertzian waves which are used in wireless. All these are the same kind of thing, but differ in wave-length.

Now of all these happenings, we are only aware of what appears to be a very arbitrary selection. Mechanical changes we are aware of through our sense of touch. Air-vibrations we hear, but not all of them—the small wave-lengths are pitched too high for our ears, though some of them can be heard by other creatures, such as dogs and bats. We have a heat sense and a cold sense, and two kinds of chemical senses for different sorts of chemical changes—taste and smell. But we possess no special electrical sense—we have no way of telling whether a live rail is carrying a current or not unless we actually touch it, and then what we feel is merely pain.

The oddest facts, however, concern light and kindred vibrations. We have no sense organs for perceiving X rays, although they may be pouring into us and doing grave damage. We do not perceive ultra-violet light, though some insects, like bees, can see it. And we have no sense organs for Hertzian waves, though we make machines—wireless receivers—to catch them. Out of all this immense range of vibrations, the only ones of which we are aware through our senses are radiant heat and light. The waves of radiant heat we perceive through the effect which they have on our temperature sense organs, and the light-waves we see. But what we see is only a single octave of the light waves, as opposed to ten or eleven octaves of sound waves which we can hear.

This curious state of affairs begins to be comprehensible when we remember that our sense organs have been evolved in relation to the world in which our ancestors lived. In nature, there are large scale electrical discharges such as lightning, and they act so capriciously and violently that to be able to detect them would be no advantage. The same is true of X rays. The amount of them knocking about under normal conditions is so small that there is no point in having sense organs to tell us about them. Wireless waves, on the other hand, are of such huge wave lengths that they go right through living matter without affecting it. Even if they were present in nature, there would be no obvious way of developing a sense organ to perceive them.

As regards light, there seem to be two reasons why our eyes are limited to seeing only a single octave of the waves. One is that of the ether vibrations raying upon the earth's surface from the sun and outer space, the greatest amount is centered in this region of the spectrum, the intensity of light of higher or lower wave lengths is much less, and would only suffice to give us a dim sensation. Our greatest capacity for seeing is closely adjusted to the amount of light to be seen. The other is more subtle, and has to do with the properties of light of different wave-

lengths Ultra-violet light is of so short a wave-length that much of it gets scattered as it passes through the air, instead of progressing forward in straight lines. Hence a photograph which uses only the ultra-violet rays is blurred and shows no details of the distance. A photograph taken by infra red light, on the other hand, while it shows the distant landscape very well, over-emphasizes the contrast between light and shade in the foreground. Leaves and grass reflect all the infra red, and so look white, while the shadows are inky-black, with no gradations. The result looks like a snowscape. An eye which could see the ultra violet octave would see the world as in a fog, and one which could see only the infra red octave would find it impossible to pick out lurking enemies in the jet black shadows. The particular range of light to which our eyes are attuned gives the best graded contrast.

Then of course there is the pleasant or unpleasant quality of a sensation, and this, too, is in general related to our way of life. I will take one example. Both lead acetate and sugar taste sweet, the former is a poison, but very rare in nature, the latter is a useful food, and common in nature. Accordingly we most of us find a sweet taste pleasant. But if lead acetate were as common in nature as sugar, and sugar as rare as lead acetate, it is safe to prophesy that we should find sweetness a most horrible taste, because we should only survive if we spat out anything which tasted sweet.

Now let us turn to another feature of man's life which would probably seem exceedingly queer to a scientist from another planet—sex. We are so used to the fact that our race is divided up into two quite different kinds of individuals, male and female, and that our existence largely circles round this fact, that we rarely pause to think about it. But there is no inherent reason why this should be so. Some kinds of animals consist only of females, some, like ants, have neuters in addition to the two sexes, some plants are altogether sexless.

As a matter of fact, the state of affairs as regards human sex is due to a long and curious sequence of causes. The fundamental fact of sex has nothing to do with reproduction, it is the union of two living cells into one. The actual origin of this remains mysterious. Once it had originated, however, it proved of biological value, by conferring greater variability on the race, and so greater elasticity in meeting changed conditions. That is why sex is so nearly universal. Later, it was a matter of biological convenience that reproduction in higher animals became indissolubly tied up with sex. Once this had happened the force of natural selection in all its intensity became focused on the sex instinct, because in the long run those strains which reproduce themselves abundantly

will live on, while those which do not do so will gradually be supplanted

A wholly different biological invention, the retention of the young within the mother's body for protection led to the two sexes becoming much more different in construction and instincts than would otherwise have been the case. The instinctive choice of a more pleasing as against a less pleasing mate—what Darwin called sexual selection—led to the evolution of all kinds of beautiful or striking qualities which in a sexless race would never have developed. The most obvious of such characters are seen in the gorgeous plumage of many birds, but sexual selection has undoubtedly modelled us human beings in many details—the curves of our bodies, the colours of lips, eyes, cheeks, the hair of our heads, and the quality of our voices.

Then we should not forget that almost all other mammals and all birds are, even when adult, fully sexed only for a part of the year after the breeding season they relapse into a more or less neuter state. How radically different human life would be if we too behaved thus! But man has continued an evolutionary trend begun for some unknown reason among the monkeys, and remains continuously sexed all the year round. Hunger and love are the two primal urges of man but by what a strange series of biological steps has love attained its position!

We could go on enumerating facts about the relativity of man's physical construction, but time is short, and I must say a word about his mind. *For that too has developed in relation to the conditions of our life, present and past.* Many philosophers and theologians have been astonished at the strength of the feeling which prompts most men and women to cling to life, to feel that life is worth living, even in the most wretched circumstances. But to the biologist there is nothing surprising in this. Those men (and animals) who have the urge to go on living strongly developed will automatically survive and breed in greater numbers than *those in whom it is weak.* Nature's pessimists automatically eliminate themselves, and their pessimistic tendencies, from the race. A race without a strong will to live could no more hold its own than one without a strong sexual urge.

Then again man's highest impulses would not exist if it were not for two simple biological facts—that his offspring are born helpless and must be protected and tended for years if they are to grow up, and that he is a gregarious animal. These facts make it biologically necessary for him to have well developed altruistic instincts, which may and often do come into conflict with his egoistic instincts, but are in point of fact responsible for half of his attitude towards life. Neither a solitary creature like a cat or a hawk, nor a creature with no biological responsibility towards its

young, like a lizard or a fish, could possibly have developed such strong altruistic instincts as are found in man

Other instincts appear to be equally relative. Everyone who has any acquaintance with wild birds and animals knows how much different species differ in temperament. Most kinds of mice are endowed with a great deal of fear and very little ferocity, while the reverse is true of various carnivores like tigers or Tasmanian devils. It would appear that the amounts of fear and anger in man's emotional make up are greater than his needs as a civilized being, and are survivals from an earlier period of his racial history. In the dawn of man's evolution from apes, a liberal dose of fear was undoubtedly needed if he was to be preserved from foolhardiness in a world peopled by wild beasts and hostile tribes, and an equally liberal dose of anger, the emotion underlying pugnacity, if he was to triumph over danger when it came. But now they are on the whole a source of weakness and maladjustment.

It is often said that you cannot change human nature. But that is only true in the short range view. In the long run, human nature could as readily be changed as feline nature has actually been changed in the domestic cat, where man's selection has produced an amiable animal out of a fierce ancestral spit fire of a creature. If, for instance, civilization should develop in such a way that mild and placid people tended to have larger families than those of high strung or violent temperament, in a few centuries human nature would alter in the direction of mildness.

Pavlov has shown how even dogs can be made to have nervous breakdowns by artificially generating in their minds conflicting urges to two virtually exclusive kinds of action, and we all know that the same thing, on a higher level of complexity, happens in human beings. But a nervous breakdown puts an organism out of action for the practical affairs of life, quite as effectively as does an ordinary infectious disease. And just as against physical germ diseases we have evolved a protection in the shape of the immunity reactions of our blood, so we have evolved oblivion as protection against the mental diseases arising out of conflict. For, generally speaking, what happens is that we forget one of the two conflicting ideas or motives. We do this either by giving the inconvenient idea an extra kick into the limbo of the forgotten, which psychologists call suppression, or else, when it refuses to go so simply, by forcibly keeping it under in the sub conscious, which is styled repression. For details about suppression and repression and their often curious and sometimes disastrous results I must ask you to refer to any modern book on psychology. All I want to point out here is that a special mental machinery has been evolved for putting inconvenient ideas out of consciousness,

and that the contents and construction of our minds are different in consequence

But I have said enough, I hope, to give you some idea of what is implied by calling man a relative being. It implies that he has no real meaning apart from the world which he inhabits. Perhaps this is not quite accurate. The mere fact that man, a portion of the general stuff of which the universe is made, can think and feel, aspire and plan, is itself full of meaning, but the precise way in which man is made, his physical construction, the kinds of feelings he has, the way he thinks, the things he thinks about, everything which gives his existence form and precision—all this can only be properly understood in relation to his environment. For he and his environment make one interlocking whole.

The great advances in scientific understanding and practical control often begin when people begin asking questions about things which up till then they have merely taken for granted. If humanity is to be brought under its own conscious control, it must cease taking itself for granted, and, even though the process may often be humiliating, begin to examine itself in a completely detached and scientific spirit.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 According to Huxley, what is the importance of biology to human beings?
2. What changes in behavior does Huxley believe are due to medicine and physiology?
- 3 What does Huxley cite as the chief differences between living matter and non living matter?
- 4 Explain the meaning of "natural selection."
- 5 What is the importance of the relative size of human beings in the process of evolution by natural selection?
- 6 Explain what Huxley means by "the relativity of our nature"—especially in regard to sensory perceptions.
- 7 How does Huxley account for differences of temperament in different species?
- 8 Point out the places in which Huxley specifically reminds the reader that he means to emphasize the idea of man in relation to his environment. What is the effect of this repetition?
- 9 What is Huxley attempting to accomplish in the first four paragraphs?
- 10 Analyze the construction of paragraph 3. What is the relation between its organization and the last sentence of the previous paragraph?
- 11 For what purpose does Huxley use the hypothetical Martian scientists in the organization of the essay? Point out the divisions of the essay based on what these scientists would need to know about man.
12. Is the last paragraph an effective conclusion to this essay? Why?

## FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you find justification for highly competitive behavior among human beings in the fact that competition apparently plays an important part in the evolutionary process?
2. Huxley suggests that humanity must examine itself in a detached and scientific spirit if it is to bring itself under "conscious control." What does the term "conscious control" mean to you? Do you think it is desirable that mankind should try to achieve this conscious control?
3. What are some of the modes of regulating human behavior that exist outside the biological sciences? Do you think they are often in conflict with the findings of the biological sciences?
4. Is there any evidence to show that human nature has (or has not) changed for the better in the several thousand years for which we have written records?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. Human beings as they would seem to a being from Mars
2. How biological knowledge can be used to improve human behavior
3. Differences in temperament between big people and small people, and the reasons for them
4. What will happen to mankind if it becomes necessary to live under ground
5. My guess as to why I like my favorite food

## RUTH BENEDICT

(1887-1948) was Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University. She made a number of field trips to American Indian tribes and wrote *Race, Science and Politics*, *Patterns of Culture*, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. [This selection from *Patterns of Culture* by Ruth Benedict is reprinted by permission of and arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.]

### *The Individual and the Pattern of Culture*

There is no proper antagonism between the rôle of society and that of the individual. One of the most misleading misconceptions due to this nineteenth-century dualism was the idea that what was subtracted from society was added to the individual and what was subtracted from the individual was added to society. Philosophies of freedom, political creeds of *laissez faire*, revolutions that have unseated dynasties, have been built on this dualism. The quarrel in anthropological theory between the

importance of the culture pattern and of the individual is only a small ripple from this fundamental conception of the nature of society

In reality, society and the individual are not antagonists. His culture provides the raw material of which the individual makes his life. If it is meagre, the individual suffers, if it is rich, the individual has the chance to rise to his opportunity. Every private interest of every man and woman is served by the enrichment of the traditional stores of his civilization. The richest musical sensitivity can operate only within the equipment and standards of its tradition. It will add, perhaps importantly, to that tradition, but its achievement remains in proportion to the instruments and musical theory which the culture has provided. In the same fashion a talent for observation expends itself in some Melanesian tribe upon the negligible borders of the magico religious field. For a realization of its potentialities it is dependent upon the development of scientific methodology, and it has no fruition unless the culture has elaborated the necessary concepts and tools.

The man in the street still thinks in terms of a necessary antagonism between society and the individual. In large measure this is because in our civilization the regulative activities of society are singled out, and we tend to identify society with the restrictions the law imposes upon us. The law lays down the number of miles per hour that I may drive an automobile. If it takes this restriction away, I am by that much the freer. This basis for a fundamental antagonism between society and the individual is naive indeed when it is extended as a basic philosophical and political notion. Society is only incidentally and in certain situations regulative, and law is not equivalent to the social order. In the simpler homogeneous cultures collective habit or custom may quite supersede the necessity for any development of formal legal authority. American Indians sometimes say 'In the old days, there were no fights about hunting grounds or fishing territories. There was no law then, so everybody did what was right.' The phrasing makes it clear that in their old life they did not think of themselves as submitting to a social control imposed upon them from without. Even in our civilization the law is never more than a crude implement of society, and one it is often enough necessary to check in its arrogant career. It is never to be read off as if it were the equivalent of the social order.

Society in its full sense is never an entity separable from the individuals who compose it. No individual can arrive even at the threshold of his potentialities without a culture in which he participates. Conversely, no civilization has in it any element which in the last analysis is not the contribution of an individual. Where else could any trait come from except from the behaviour of a man or a woman or a child?



It is largely because of the traditional acceptance of a conflict between society and the individual, that emphasis upon cultural behaviour is so often interpreted as a denial of the autonomy of the individual. The reading of Sumner's *Folkways* usually rouses a protest at the limitations such an interpretation places upon the scope and initiative of the individual. Anthropology is often believed to be a counsel of despair which makes untenable a beneficent human illusion. But no anthropologist with a background of experience of other cultures has ever believed that individuals were automatons, mechanically carrying out the decrees of their civilization. No culture yet observed has been able to eradicate the differences in the temperaments of the persons who compose it. It is always a give-and take. The problem of the individual is not clarified by stressing the antagonism between culture and the individual, but by stressing their mutual reinforcement. This rapport is so close that it is not possible to discuss patterns of culture without considering specifically their relation to individual psychology.

We have seen that any society selects some segment of the arc of possible human behaviour, and insofar as it achieves integration its institutions tend to further the expression of its selected segment and to inhibit opposite expressions. But these opposite expressions are the congenial responses, nevertheless, of a certain proportion of the carriers of the culture. We have already discussed the reasons for believing that this selection is primarily cultural and not biological. We cannot, therefore, even on theoretical grounds imagine that all the congenial responses of all its people will be equally served by the institutions of any culture. To understand the behaviour of the individual, it is not merely necessary to relate his personal life history to his endowments, and to measure these against an arbitrarily selected normality. It is necessary also to relate his congenial responses to the behaviour that is singled out in the institutions of his culture.

The vast proportion of all individuals who are born into any society always and whatever the idiosyncrasies of its institutions, assume the behaviour dictated by that society. This fact is always interpreted by the carriers of that culture as being due to the fact that their particular institutions reflect an ultimate and universal sanity. The actual reason is quite different. Most people are shaped to the form of their culture because of the enormous malleability of their original endowment. They are plastic to the moulding force of the society into which they are born. It does not matter whether it requires delusions of self reference, or with our own civilization the amassing of possessions. In any case the great mass of individuals take quite readily the form that is presented to them. They do not all, however, find it equally congenial, and those are

favoured and fortunate whose potentialities most nearly coincide with the type of behaviour selected by their society. Those who, in a situation in which they are frustrated, naturally seek ways of putting the occasion out of sight as expeditiously as possible are well served in Pueblo culture Southwest institutions minimize the situations in which serious frustration can arise, and when it cannot be avoided, as in death, they provide means to put it behind them with all speed.

On the other hand, those who react to frustration as to an insult and whose first thought is to get even are amply provided for on the Northwest Coast. They may extend their native reaction to situations in which their paddle breaks or their canoe overturns or to the loss of relatives by death. They rise from their first reaction of sulking to thrust back in return, to 'fight' with property or with weapons. Those who can assuage despair by the act of bringing shame to others can register freely and without conflict in this society, because their proclivities are deeply channelled in their culture. In Dobu those whose first impulse is to select a victim and project their misery upon him in procedures of punishment are equally fortunate.

Some cultures meet frustration in a realistic manner by stressing the resumption of the original and interrupted experience. It might even seem that in the case of death this is impossible. But the institutions of many cultures nevertheless attempt nothing less. Some of the forms the restitution takes are repugnant to us, but that only makes it clearer that in cultures where frustration is handled by giving rein to this potential behaviour, the institutions of that society carry this course to extraordinary lengths. Among the Eskimo, when one man has killed another, the family of the man who has been murdered may take the murderer to replace the loss within its own group. The murderer then becomes the husband of the woman who has been widowed by his act. This is an emphasis upon restitution that ignores all other aspects of the situation—those *which seem to us the only important ones*, but when tradition selects some such objective it is quite in character that it should disregard all else.

Restitution may be carried out in mourning situations in ways that are less uncongenial to the standards of Western civilization. Among certain of the Central Algonkian Indians south of the Great Lakes the usual procedure was adoption. Upon the death of a child a similar child was put into his place. The similarity was determined in all sorts of ways: often a captive brought in from a raid was taken into the family in the full sense and given all the privileges and the tenderness that had originally been given to the dead child. Or quite as often it was the child's closest playmate, or a child from another related settlement who

resembled the dead child in height and features. In such cases the family from which the child was chosen was supposed to be pleased, and indeed in most cases it was by no means the great step that it would be under our institutions. The child had always recognized many 'mothers' and many homes where he was on familiar footing. The new allegiance made him thoroughly at home in still another household. From the point of view of the bereaved parents, the situation had been met by a restitution of the *status quo* that existed before the death of their child.

Persons who primarily mourn the situation rather than the lost individual are provided for in these cultures to a degree which is unimaginable under our institutions. We recognize the possibility of such solace, but we are careful to minimize its connection with the original loss. We do not use it as a mourning technique, and individuals who would be well satisfied with such a solution are left unsupported until the difficult crisis is past.

There is another possible attitude toward frustration. Instead of trying to get past the experience with the least possible discomfiture, it finds relief in the most extravagant expression of grief. The Indians of the plains capitalized the utmost indulgences and exacted violent demonstrations of emotion as a matter of course.

In any group of individuals we can recognize those to whom these different reactions to frustration and grief are congenial. Ignoring it, indulging it by uninhibited expression, getting even, punishing a victim, and seeking restitution of the original situation. In the psychiatric records of our own society, some of these impulses are recognized as bad ways of dealing with the situation, some as good. The bad ones are said to lead to maladjustments and insanities, the good ones to adequate social functioning. It is clear, however, that the correlation does not lie between any one bad tendency and abnormality in any absolute sense. The desire to run away from grief to leave it behind at all costs, does not foster psychotic behaviour where, as among the Pueblos, it is mapped out by institutions and supported by every attitude of the group. The Pueblos are not a neurotic people. Their culture gives the impression of fostering mental health. Similarly, the paranoid attitudes so violently expressed among the Kwakiutl are known in psychiatric theory derived from our own civilization as thoroughly bad, that is they lead in various ways to the breakdown of personality. But it is just those individuals among the Kwakiutl who find it congenial to give the freest expression to these attitudes who nevertheless are the leaders of Kwakiutl society and find greatest personal fulfilment in its culture.

Obviously, adequate personal adjustment does not depend upon following certain motivations and eschewing others. The correlation is

in a different direction. Just as those are favoured whose congenial responses are closest to that behaviour which characterizes their society, so those are disoriented whose congenial responses fall in that arc of behaviour which is not capitalized by their culture. These abnormals are those who are not supported by the institutions of their civilization. They are the exceptions who have not easily taken the traditional forms of their culture.

For a valid comparative psychiatry, these disoriented persons who have failed to adapt themselves adequately to their cultures are of first importance. The issue in psychiatry has been too often confused by starting from a fixed list of symptoms instead of from the studying of those whose characteristic reactions are denied validity in their society.

[Various tribes] have their nonparticipating 'abnormal' individuals. The individual in Dobu who was thoroughly disoriented was the man who was *naturally friendly and found activity an end in itself*. He was a pleasant fellow who did not seek to overthrow his fellows or to punish them. He worked for anyone who asked him, and he was tireless in carrying out their commands. He was not filled by a terror of the dark like his fellows, and he did not, as they did, utterly inhibit simple public responses of friendliness toward women closely related, like a wife or sister. He often patted them playfully in public. In any other Dobuan this was scandalous behaviour, but in him it was regarded as merely silly. The village treated him in a kindly enough fashion, not taking advantage of him or making a sport of ridiculing him, but he was definitely regarded as one who was outside the game.

The behaviour congenial to the Dobuan simpleton has been made the ideal in certain periods of our own civilization, and there are still vocations in which his responses are accepted in most Western communities. Especially if a woman is in question, she is well provided for even today in our *mores*, and functions honourably in her family and community. The fact that the Dobuan could not function in his culture was not a consequence of the particular responses that were congenial to him, but of the chasm between them and the cultural pattern.

Most ethnologists have had similar experiences in recognizing that the persons who are put outside the pale of society with contempt are not those who would be placed there by another culture. Lowie found among the Crow Indians of the plains a man of exceptional knowledge of his cultural forms. He was interested in considering these objectively and in correlating different facets. He had an interest in genealogical facts and was invaluable on points of history. Altogether he was an ideal interpreter of Crow life. These traits, however, were not those which were the password to honour among the Crow. He had a definite shrink-

ing from physical danger, and bravado as the tribal virtue. To make matters worse he had attempted to gain recognition by claiming a war honour which was fraudulent. He was proved not to have brought in, as he claimed, a picketed horse from the enemy's camp. To lay false claim to war honours was a paramount sin among the Crow, and by the general opinion, constantly reiterated, he was regarded as irresponsible and incompetent.

Such situations can be paralleled with the attitude in our civilization toward a man who does not succeed in regarding personal possessions as supremely important. Our hobo population is constantly fed by those to whom the accumulation of property is not a sufficient motivation. In case these individuals ally themselves with the hoboes, public opinion regards them as potentially vicious, as indeed because of the asocial situation into which they are thrust they readily become. In case, however, these men compensate by emphasizing their artistic temperament and become members of expatriated groups of petty artists, opinion regards them not as vicious but as silly. In any case they are unsupported by the forms of their society, and the effort to express themselves satisfactorily is ordinarily a greater task than they can achieve.

The dilemma of such an individual is often most successfully solved by doing violence to his strongest natural impulses and accepting the rôle the culture honours. In case he is a person to whom social recognition is necessary, it is ordinarily his only possible course. One of the most striking individuals in Zuni had accepted this necessity. In a society that thoroughly distrusts authority of any sort, he had a native personal magnetism that singled him out in any group. In a society that exalts moderation and the easiest way, he was turbulent and could act violently upon occasion. In a society that praises a pliant personality that 'talks lots'—that is, that chatters in a friendly fashion—he was scornful and aloof. Zuñi's only reaction to such personalities is to brand them as witches. He was said to have been seen peering through a window from outside, and this is a sure mark of a witch. At any rate, he got drunk one day and boasted that they could not kill him. He was taken before the war priests who hung him by his thumbs from the rafters till he should confess to his witchcraft. This is the usual procedure in a charge of witchcraft. However, he dispatched a messenger to the government troops. When they came, his shoulders were already crippled for life, and the officer of the law was left with no recourse but to imprison the war priests who had been responsible for the enormity. One of these war priests was probably the most respected and important person in recent Zuñi history, and when he returned after imprisonment in the state penitentiary he never resumed his priestly offices. He regarded his power

as broken. It was a revenge that is probably unique in Zuñi history. It involved, of course, a challenge to the priesthoods, against whom the witch by his act openly aligned himself.

The course of his life in the forty years that followed this defiance was not, however, what we might easily predict. A witch is not barred from his membership in cult groups because he has been condemned, and the way to recognition lay through such activity. He possessed a remarkable verbal memory and a sweet singing voice. He learned unbelievable stores of mythology, of esoteric ritual, of cult songs. Many hundreds of pages of stories and ritual poetry were taken down from his dictation before he died, and he regarded his songs as much more extensive. He became indispensable in ceremonial life and before he died was the governor of Zuni. The congenial bent of his personality threw him into irreconcilable conflict with his society, and he solved his dilemma by turning an incidental talent to account. As we might well expect, he was not a happy man. As a governor of Zuñi, and high in his cult groups, a marked man in his community, he was obsessed by death. He was a cheated man in the midst of a mildly happy populace.

It is easy to imagine the life he might have lived among the Plains Indians, where every institution favoured the traits that were native to him. The personal authority, the turbulence, the scorn, would all have been honoured in the career he could have made his own. The unhappiness that was inseparable from his temperament as a successful priest and governor of Zuni would have had no place as a war chief of the Cheyenne, it was not a function of the traits of his native endowment but of the standards of the culture in which he found no outlet for his native responses.

The individuals we have so far discussed are not in any sense psychopathic. They illustrate the dilemma of the individual whose congenial drives are not provided for in the institutions of his culture. This dilemma becomes of psychiatric importance when the behaviour in question is regarded as categorically abnormal in a society. Western civilization tends to regard even a mild homosexual as an abnormal. The clinical picture of homosexuality stresses the neuroses and psychoses to which it gives rise, and emphasizes almost equally the inadequate functioning of the invert and his behaviour. We have only to turn to other cultures, however, to realize that homosexuals have by no means been uniformly inadequate to the social situation. They have not always failed to function. In some societies they have even been especially acclaimed. Plato's *Republic* is, of course, the most convincing statement of the honourable estate of homosexuality. It is presented as a major means to the good

life, and Plato's high ethical evaluation of this response was upheld in the customary behaviour of Greece at that period

The American Indians do not make Plato's high moral claims for homosexuality, but homosexuals are often regarded as exceptionally able. In most of North America there exists the institution of the *berdache*, as the French called them. These men-women were men who at puberty or thereafter took the dress and occupations of women. Sometimes they married other men and lived with them. Sometimes they were men with no inversion, persons of weak sexual endowment who chose this role to avoid the jeers of the women. The *berdaches* were never regarded as of first-rate supernatural power, as similar men-women were in Siberia, but rather as leaders in women's occupations, good healers in certain diseases, or, among certain tribes, as the genial organizers of social affairs. They were usually, in spite of the manner in which they were accepted, regarded with a certain embarrassment. It was thought slightly ridiculous to address as 'she' a person who was known to be a man and who, as in Zuñi, would be buried on the men's side of the cemetery. But they were socially placed. The emphasis in most tribes was upon the fact that men who took over women's occupations excelled by reason of their strength and initiative and were therefore leaders in women's techniques and in the accumulation of those forms of property made by women. One of the best known of all the Zunis of a generation ago was the man-woman We-wha, who was, in the words of his friend, Mrs. Stevenson, 'certainly the strongest person in Zuni, both mentally and physically'. His remarkable memory for ritual made him a chief personage on ceremonial occasions, and his strength and intelligence made him a leader in all kinds of crafts.

The men women of Zuni are not all strong, self-reliant personages. Some of them take this refuge to protect themselves against their inability to take part in men's activities. One is almost a simpleton, and one, hardly more than a little boy, has delicate features like a girl's. There are obviously several reasons why a person becomes a *berdache* in Zuñi, but whatever the reason, men who have chosen openly to assume women's dress have the same chance as any other persons to establish themselves as functioning members of the society. Their response is socially recognized. If they have native ability, they can give it scope, if they are weak creatures, they fail in terms of their weakness of character, not in terms of their inversion.

The Indian institution of the *berdache* was most strongly developed on the plains. The Dakota had a saying: fine possessions like a *berdache's*, and it was the epitome of praise for any woman's household possessions. A *berdache* had two strings to his bow, he was supreme in women's

techniques, and he could also support his *menage* by the man's activity of hunting. Therefore no one was richer. When especially fine beadwork or dressed skins were desired for ceremonial occasions, the berdache's work was sought in preference to any other's. It was his social adequacy that was stressed above all else. As in Zuñi, the attitude toward him is ambivalent and touched with malaise in the face of a recognized incongruity. Social scorn, however, was visited not upon the berdache but upon the man who lived with him. The latter was regarded as a weak man who had chosen an easy berth instead of the recognized goals of their culture, he did not contribute to the household, which was already a model for all households through the sole efforts of the berdache. His sexual adjustment was not singled out in the judgment that was passed upon him, but in terms of his economic adjustment he was an outcast.

When the homosexual response is regarded as a perversion, however, the invert is immediately exposed to all the conflicts to which aberrants are always exposed. His guilt, his sense of inadequacy, his failures, are consequences of the disrepute which social tradition visits upon him, and few people can achieve a satisfactory life unsupported by the standards of the society. The adjustments that society demands of them would strain any man's vitality, and the consequences of this conflict we identify with their homosexuality.

Trance is a similar abnormality in our society. Even a very mild mystic is aberrant in Western civilization. In order to study trance or catalepsy within our own social groups, we have to go to the case histories of the abnormal. Therefore the correlation between trance experience and the neurotic and psychotic seems perfect. As in the case of the homosexual, however, it is a local correlation characteristic of our century. Even in our own cultural background other eras give different results. In the Middle Ages when Catholicism made the ecstatic experience the mark of sainthood, the trance experience was greatly valued, and those to whom the response was congenial, instead of being overwhelmed by a catastrophe as in our century, were given confidence in the pursuit of their careers. It was a validation of ambitions, not a stigma of insanity. Individuals who were susceptible to trance, therefore, succeeded or failed in terms of their native capacities, but since trance experience was highly valued, a great leader was very likely to be capable of it.

Among primitive peoples, trance and catalepsy have been honoured in the extreme. Some of the Indian tribes of California accorded prestige principally to those who passed through certain trance experiences. Not all of these tribes believed that it was exclusively women who were so blessed, but among the Shasta this was the convention. Their shamans



were women, and they were accorded the greatest prestige in the community. They were chosen because of their constitutional liability to trance and allied manifestations. One day the woman who was so destined, while she was about her usual work, fell suddenly to the ground. She had heard a voice speaking to her in tones of the greatest intensity. Turning, she had seen a man with drawn bow and arrow. He commanded her to sing on pain of being shot through the heart by his arrow, but under the stress of the experience she fell senseless. Her family gathered. She was lying rigidly, hardly breathing. They knew that for some time she had had dreams of a special character which indicated a shamanistic calling, dreams of escaping grizzly bears, falling off cliffs or trees, or of being surrounded by swarms of yellow jackets. The community knew therefore what to expect. After a few hours the woman began to moan gently and to roll about upon the ground, trembling violently. She was supposed to be repeating the song which she had been told to sing and which during the trance had been taught her by the spirit. As she revived, her moaning became more and more clearly the spirit's song until at last she called out the name of the spirit itself, and immediately blood oozed from her mouth.

When the woman had come to herself after the first encounter with her spirit, she danced that night her first initiatory shaman's dance. For three nights she danced, holding herself by a rope that was swung from the ceiling. On the third night she had to receive in her body her power from the spirit. She was dancing, and as she felt the approach of the moment she called out, 'He will shoot me, he will shoot me.' Her friends stood close, for when she reeled in a kind of cataleptic seizure, they had to seize her before she fell or she would die. From this time on she had in her body a visible materialization of her spirit's power, an icicle like object which in her dances thereafter she would exhibit, producing it from one part of her body and returning it to another part. From this time on she continued to validate her supernatural power by further cataleptic demonstrations, and she was called upon in great emergencies of life and death, for curing and for divination and for a counsel. She became, in other words, by this procedure a woman of great power and importance.

It is clear that, far from regarding cataleptic seizures as blots upon the family escutcheon and as evidences of dreaded disease, cultural approval had seized upon them and made of them the pathway to authority over one's fellows. They were the outstanding characteristic of the most respected social type, the type which functioned with most honour and reward in the community. It was precisely the cataleptic individuals who in this culture were singled out for authority and leadership.

The possible usefulness of 'abnormal' types in a social structure, provided they are types that are culturally selected by that group, is illustrated from every part of the world. The shamans of Siberia dominate their communities. According to the ideas of these peoples, they are individuals who by submission to the will of the spirits have been cured of a grievous illness—the onset of the seizures—and have acquired by this means great supernatural power and incomparable vigour and health. Some, during the period of the call, are violently insane for several years, others irresponsible to the point where they have to be constantly watched lest they wander off in the snow and freeze to death, others ill and emaciated to the point of death, sometimes with bloody sweat. It is the shamanistic practice which constitutes their cure, and the extreme exertion of a Siberian seance leaves them, they claim, rested and able to enter immediately upon a similar performance. Cataleptic seizures are regarded as an essential part of any shamanistic performance.

It is clear that culture may value and make socially available even highly unstable human types. If it chooses to treat their peculiarities as the most valued variants of human behaviour, the individuals in question will rise to the occasion and perform their social roles without reference to our usual ideas of the types who can make social adjustments and those who cannot. Those who function inadequately in any society are not those with certain fixed 'abnormal' traits, but may well be those whose responses have received no support in the institutions of their culture. The weakness of these aberrants is in great measure illusory. It springs, not from the fact that they are lacking in necessary vigour, but that they are individuals whose native responses are not reaffirmed by society. They are, as Sapir phrases it, 'alienated from an impossible world'.

The person unsupported by the standards of his time and place and left naked to the winds of ridicule has been unforgettably drawn in European literature in the figure of Don Quixote. Cervantes turned upon a tradition still honoured in the abstract the limelight of a changed set of practical standards, and his poor old man, the orthodox upholder of the romantic chivalry of another generation, became a simpleton. The windmills with which he tilted were the serious antagonists of a hardly vanished world, but to tilt with them when the world no longer called them serious was to rave. He loved his Dulcinea in the best traditional manner of chivalry, but another version of love was fashionable for the moment, and his fervour was counted to him for madness.

These contrasting worlds which, in the primitive cultures we have considered, are separated from one another in space, in modern Occidental history more often succeed one another in time. The major issue

is the same in either case, but the importance of understanding the phenomenon is far greater in the modern world where we cannot escape if we would from the succession of configurations in time. When each culture is a world in itself, relatively stable like the Eskimo culture, for example, and geographically isolated from all others, the issue is academic. But our civilization must deal with cultural standards that go down under our eyes and new ones that arise from a shadow upon the horizon. We must be willing to take account of changing normalities even when the question is of the morality in which we were bred. Just as we are handicapped in dealing with ethical problems so long as we hold to an absolute definition of morality, so we are handicapped in dealing with human society so long as we identify our local normalities with the inevitable necessities of existence.

No society has yet attempted a self-conscious direction of the process by which its new normalities are created in the next generation. Dewey has pointed out how possible and yet how drastic such social engineering would be. For some traditional arrangements it is obvious that very high prices are paid, reckoned in terms of human suffering and frustration. If these arrangements presented themselves to us merely as arrangements and not as categorical imperatives, our reasonable course would be to adapt them by whatever means to rationally selected goals. What we do instead is to ridicule our Don Quixotes, the ludicrous embodiments of an outmoded tradition, and continue to regard our own as final and prescribed in the nature of things.

In the meantime the therapeutic problem of dealing with our psychopaths of this type is often misunderstood. Their alienation from the actual world can often be more intelligently handled than by insisting that they adopt the modes that are alien to them. Two other courses are always possible. In the first place, the misfit individual may cultivate a greater objective interest in his own preferences and learn how to manage with greater equanimity his deviation from the type. If he learns to recognize the extent to which his suffering has been due to his lack of support in a traditional ethos, he may gradually educate himself to accept his degree of difference with less suffering. Both the exaggerated emotional disturbances of the manic depressive and the seclusion of the schizophrenic add certain values to existence which are not open to those differently constituted. The unsupported individual who valiantly accepts his favourite and native virtues may attain a feasible course of behaviour that makes it unnecessary for him to take refuge in a private world he has fashioned for himself. He may gradually achieve a more independent and less tortured attitude toward his deviations and upon this attitude he may be able to build an adequately functioning existence.

In the second place, an increased tolerance in society toward its less usual types must keep pace with the self education of the patient. The possibilities in this direction are endless. Tradition is as neurotic as any patient, its overgrown fear of deviation from its fortuitous standards conforms to all the usual definitions of the psychopathic. This fear does not depend upon observation of the limits within which conformity is necessary to the social good. Much more deviation is allowed to the individual in some cultures than in others, and those in which much is allowed cannot be shown to suffer from their peculiarity. It is probable that social orders of the future will carry this tolerance and encouragement of individual difference much further than any cultures of which we have experience.

The American tendency at the present time leans so far to the opposite extreme that it is not easy for us to picture the changes that such an attitude would bring about. Middletown is a typical example of our usual urban fear of seeming in however slight an act different from our neighbours. Eccentricity is more feared than parasitism. Every sacrifice of time and tranquility is made in order that no one in the family may have any taint of nonconformity attached to him. Children in school make their great tragedies out of not wearing a certain kind of stockings, not joining a certain dancing-class, not driving a certain car. The fear of being different is the dominating motivation recorded in Middletown.

The psychopathic toll that such a motivation exacts is evident in every institution for mental diseases in our country. In a society in which it existed only as a minor motive among many others, the psychiatric picture would be a very different one. At all events, there can be no reasonable doubt that one of the most effective ways in which to deal with the staggering burden of psychopathic tragedies in America at the present time is by means of an educational program which fosters tolerance in society and a kind of self respect and independence that is foreign to Middletown and our urban traditions.

Not all psychopaths, of course, are individuals whose native responses are at variance with those of their civilization. Another large group are those who are merely inadequate and who are strongly enough motivated so that their failure is more than they can bear. In a society in which the will to-power is most highly rewarded, those who fail may not be those who are differently constituted, but simply those who are insufficiently endowed. The inferiority complex takes a great toll of suffering in our society. It is not necessary that sufferers of this type have a history of frustration in the sense that strong native bent have been inhibited, their frustration is often enough only the reflection of their inability to reach a certain goal. There is a cultural implication here, too, in that the

traditional goal may be accessible to large numbers or to very few, and in proportion as success is obsessive and is limited to the few, a greater and greater number will be liable to the extreme penalties of maladjustment

To a certain extent, therefore, civilization in setting higher and possibly more worth-while goals may increase the number of its abnormals. But the point may very easily be overemphasized, for very small changes in social attitudes may far outweigh this correlation. On the whole, since the social possibilities of tolerance and recognition of individual difference are so little explored in practice, pessimism seems premature. Certainly other quite different social factors which we have just discussed are more directly responsible for the great proportion of our neurotics and psychotics, and with these other factors civilizations could, if they would, deal without necessary intrinsic loss.

We have been considering individuals from the point of view of their ability to function adequately in their society. This adequate functioning is one of the ways in which normality is clinically defined. It is also defined in terms of fixed symptoms, and the tendency is to identify normality with the statistically average. In practice this average is one arrived at in the laboratory, and deviations from it are defined as abnormal.

From the point of view of a single culture this procedure is very useful. It shows the clinical picture of the civilization and gives considerable information about its socially approved behaviour. To generalize this as an absolute normal, however, is a different matter. As we have seen, the range of normality in different cultures does not coincide. Any society, according to its major preoccupations, may increase and intensify even hysterical, epileptic, or paranoid symptoms, at the same time relying socially in a greater and greater degree upon the very individuals who display them.

This fact is important in psychiatry because it makes clear another group of abnormals which probably exists in every culture—the abnormals who represent the extreme development of the local cultural type. This group is socially in the opposite situation from the group we have discussed, those whose responses are at variance with their cultural standards. Society, instead of exposing the former group at every point, supports them in their furthest aberrations. They have a license which they may almost endlessly exploit. For this reason these persons almost never fall within the scope of any contemporary psychiatry. They are unlikely to be described even in the most careful manuals of the generation that fosters them. Yet from the point of view of another generation

or culture they are ordinarily the most bizarre of the psychopathic types of the period

The Puritan divines of New England in the eighteenth century were the last persons whom contemporary opinion in the colonies regarded as psychopathic. Few prestige groups in any culture have been allowed such complete intellectual and emotional dictatorship as they were. They were the voice of God. Yet to a modern observer it is they, not the confused and tormented women they put to death as witches, who were the psychoneurotics of Puritan New England. A sense of guilt as extreme as they portrayed and demanded both in their own conversion experiences and in those of their converts is found in a slightly saner civilization only in institutions for mental diseases. They admitted no salvation without a conviction of sin that prostrated the victim, sometimes for years, with remorse and terrible anguish. It was the duty of the minister to put the fear of hell into the heart of even the youngest child, and to exact of every convert emotional acceptance of his damnation if God saw fit to damn him. It does not matter where we turn among the records of New England Puritan churches of this period, whether to those dealing with witches or with unsaved children not yet in their teens or with such themes as damnation and predestination, we are faced with the fact that the group of people who carried out to the greatest extreme and in the fullest honour the cultural doctrine of the moment are by the slightly altered standards of our generation the victims of intolerable aberrations. From the point of view of a comparative psychiatry they fall in the category of the abnormal.

In our own generation extreme forms of ego-gratification are culturally supported in a similar fashion. Arrogant and unbridled egoists as family men, as officers of the law and in business, have been again and again portrayed by novelists and dramatists, and they are familiar in every community. Like the behaviour of Puritan divines, their courses of action are often more asocial than those of the inmates of penitentiaries. In terms of the suffering and frustration that they spread about them there is probably no comparison. There is very possibly at least as great a degree of mental warping. Yet they are entrusted with positions of great influence and importance and are as a rule fathers of families. Their impress both upon their own children and upon the structure of our society is indelible. They are not described in our manuals of psychiatry because they are supported by every tenet of our civilization. They are sure of themselves in real life in a way that is possible only to those who are oriented to the points of the compass laid down in their own culture. Nevertheless a future psychiatry may well ransack our novels and letters and public records for illumination upon a type of

abnormality to which it would not otherwise give credence. In every society it is among this very group of the culturally encouraged and fortified that some of the most extreme types of human behaviour are fostered.

Social thinking at the present time has no more important task before it than that of taking adequate account of cultural relativity. In the fields of both sociology and psychology the implications are fundamental, and modern thought about contacts of peoples and about our changing standards is greatly in need of sane and scientific direction. The sophisticated modern temper has made of social relativity, even in the small area which it has recognized, a doctrine of despair. It has pointed out its incongruity with the orthodox dreams of permanence and ideality and with the individual's illusions of autonomy. It has argued that if human experience must give up these, the nutshell of existence is empty. But to interpret our dilemma in these terms is to be guilty of an anachronism. It is only the inevitable cultural lag that makes us insist that the old must be discovered again in the new, that there is no solution but to find the old certainty and stability in the new plasticity. The recognition of cultural relativity carries with it its own values, which need not be those of the absolutist philosophies. It challenges customary opinions and causes those who have been bred to them acute discomfort. It rouses pessimism because it throws old formulae into confusion, not because it contains anything intrinsically difficult. As soon as the new opinion is embraced as customary belief, it will be another trusted bulwark of the good life. We shall arrive then at a more realistic social faith, accepting as grounds of hope and as new bases for tolerance the coexisting and equally valid patterns of life which mankind has created for itself from the raw materials of existence.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Explain Mrs. Benedict's reasons for saying that some individuals in every culture are treated as "abnormal" by their culture. In other words, what constitutes abnormality for a given culture?
- 2 What, in her opinion, is responsible for the social failure of abnormal individuals in a given culture—is it primarily natural weakness in individuals, or primarily a reaction of the culture? Explain.
- 3 How does Mrs. Benedict suggest that we deal with the fact that cultural standards in our own society are rapidly changing, and that "new normalities" are arising?
- 4 What does she suggest can be done to lessen the amount of psychopathic maladjustment in our own society?
- 5 What sorts of "abnormals" does she believe are not rejected but actually supported by a culture in their extremest aberrations? What examples of this kind does she cite in our own culture?

- 6 Explain the nature of the conflict between "cultural relativity" on the one hand and "orthodox dreams of permanence and ideality" on the other
- 7 What is the central idea of this essay? Find as many explicit expressions of this idea as you can
- 8 Mrs. Benedict uses a number of specific examples in order to support certain generalizations. Show what generalization is supported by each of the specific instances
- 9 Find the sentences or paragraphs in which she indicates changes in her line of thought.
- 10 Analyze paragraph 9 of the essay on page 426. How is it organized? What is its function in the essay as a whole?
- 11 Comment on the length of the paragraphs in this essay. What is the effect of this characteristic?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 If a specific kind of behavior is normal and good in one culture and abnormal and bad in another culture, what is there to prevent any kind of behavior at all from being justified? In short, are there some things which are good everywhere, and others which are bad everywhere?
- 2 Give an example from our own culture of some example of conformity that seems to you unjustified
- 3 Give an example from our own culture of a more or less tolerated kind of non-conformity, and tell whether you think it is good for our culture.
- 4 Is Mrs. Benedict's use of primitive cultures to illustrate her points justifiable? Are these people's patterns of behavior relevant to those of our own more advanced culture?
- 5 Suppose that you are "unsupported" by the culture of your college in some specific way (you may not like football, or may prefer privacy to gregariousness or wear blue bobby-sox instead of white). How would you make an intelligent adjustment?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 The worst people in our culture.
- 2 The dangers of being different.
- 3 An example of tolerated non-conformism.
- 4 How times are changing.
- 5 My suppressed wish



## EDMUND W. SINNOTT

born 1888 Harvard educated botanist was Sterling Professor of Botany and Chairman of the Department of Botany at Yale 1940 1950 Since 1950 he has been Dean of the Graduate School at Yale [From The Saturday Review of Literature, December 23 1950, reprinted by permission of the author]

### How to Live in Two Worlds

In a day of confusion, hatred, and despair, when nations seem helplessly slipping downward toward catastrophe, no problem is more urgent than the discovery of what it was that smashed the bright hopes of half a century ago and split the world in two. This deep schism is in part, of course, a struggle between capitalism and Communism. In part it is a clash between democratic and totalitarian political systems. Beneath these more obvious differences, however, we are coming to recognize a still more profound cleavage that reaches down into the underlying beliefs by which men live, beliefs about the nature of the universe and of themselves. Here differences have grown so wide as almost to prevent a common culture for mankind. Until they can be reconciled, true peace will never come. As Professor H. A. Overstreet has well said, "If our times are out of joint it is because they are *philosophically* out of joint. If we are to set them right we shall have to set them *philosophically* right."

At the root of the world's present calamities lies such a conflict of philosophies. It is brought about primarily, I believe, by a discord between the ideas of science—modern, forward looking, dealing with no realities but matter and energy, and regarding man as a minor part of a mechanical and purposeless universe—and the ideals of our older tradition that exalt the freedom, dignity, and spiritual worth of men and believe in a universe which is somehow on the side of his high values.

Communism, adopting Marx's rather naive interpretation of science and thus unreservedly embracing a materialistic philosophy, has pressed this to its logical conclusions. If men are simply mechanisms—material, mortal, and devoid of inherent worth—why should society be concerned with the significance of individuals? Since the universe is rigidly determined by physical law, to talk of freedom within it is senseless. Society to be efficient must be tightly organized, and any "deviations" among its members should therefore be ruthlessly suppressed. Darwin has shown how progress is made only through struggle, so why harbor the preposterous illusion that good will, friendship, and love are high personal or

social ideals? Success is to the strong and to the crafty and any code that extols truth, justice, and mercy as values of life is obviously foolish. Since man is without a soul and the universe without a purpose, religion in the traditional sense or the existence of any kind of a God are clearly unthinkable. Man is but a temporary and insignificant episode in an immense universe which heeds him not at all.

However distasteful these ideas may be they are logical conclusions of scientific materialism and must be dealt with on their merits. Communism seems dedicated to such a philosophy with singleness of purpose, and from this has grown inevitably its attitude toward economics, ethics, and all other problems of human relations.

In contrast to such a truly monolithic body of doctrine the non-Communist position is confused and divided. We have not yet really made our peace with science, as our opponents have, but are still torn between instinctive loyalty to those traditional values on which Western civilization was founded and an intellectual acceptance of the conclusions that science has reached. Because of the disruptive influence of these newer ideas, especially during the century past, there is no longer a common body of agreement among us such as that which long held Christendom together, no anchor to keep society from drifting nor compass to guide its course. Traditionalists have protested against the loss of standards which undergirded the life of an earlier age, but their voices are rather hoarse today. Discord is evident not only in society but in single lives, for many people have become divided selves with different ideals at different times and doomed to inner disharmony. Man has once again been smitten with a Babel of confusion, not of tongues merely but of far deeper difference.

We cannot attain harmony among ourselves or offer a powerful alternative to Communism until we find a basic platform of belief on which we all can stand—a platform combining the best fruits of both science and idealism, broad enough to permit a wide variety of minor creeds and preferences but specific enough to provide a basis of unity among us. The fundamental controversy to be settled is not so much our quarrel with the Communists as that which rages in our own Western ranks.

To reach such a basis of agreement is evidently a task of the most formidable difficulty. Our spectrum of belief ranges from complete materialism through the various grades of agnosticism, positivism, and humanism to liberal Christianity and thence to the religions of dogma and authority exemplified by Roman Catholicism and Protestant fundamentalism. To achieve uniformity is quite unthinkable, for man is a species

that varies far too widely in its innate qualities ever to be cast into a single mold—and how fortunate we are that this is so! But the labors of science now coming abundantly to fruition and the conclusions emerging from the long experience of our race make it certain that many ancient beliefs must be revised or quite abandoned. Philosophical attitudes, however, are often so impregnably buttressed, both by tradition and vested ideological interests, that anyone raising a voice against them is often condemned either as one who is intolerant and would profane sacred things or as a soft headed betrayer of *man's intelligence*

Has not the time come, nevertheless, frankly to admit that the beliefs which rule the lives of most of our race are now hopelessly inadequate to meet the complex problems of a new world? Wisely and courageously but in all tolerance, humility, and good will this fact must be squarely faced. It has been studied so long and earnestly that little new or important can be said about it now, but as a prelude to any program of action we should try to see clearly what are the problems here involved and the obstacles to their solution

In the construction of such a basis for agreement one first must be clear as to why the philosophical unity of the Western world was so shattered by the rise of modern science. The reasons are familiar enough

Science challenges the ancient authorities on which so much of Western culture was founded. Chief among these are the great books that constitute our Bible. Their credibility in matters of science was dramatically questioned by the theory of evolution a century ago and is called into question by the whole trend of biological progress since. The other great authority, that of the Church, its scriptural support thus weakened, was likewise greatly shaken

The old ideas as to the nature of man were seriously challenged also. Our growing scientific knowledge about man offers no evidence that man is an exalted being created in the very image of God and possessed of an immortal soul, but proves him to be descended from the brutes and made in the image of a group of genes. Biological theory further implies that every living thing, man not excluded, is a physico-chemical mechanism—very complex, to be sure, but still a mechanism—and consequently that his possession of freedom or such a thing as a 'soul' has no support in science. And as to his future, says Bertrand Russell, 'the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins'

Worse still, man's lofty conception of a God is very difficult to reconcile with that of the rigidly determined mechanical universe which science seems to portray. In such a purposeless system one asks, why is God necessary? What difference could He make? How can He help us? As

Professor W. T. Stace has recently said, 'We do not live in a universe which is on the side of our values. It is completely indifferent to them.'

If all this is so, one well may ask why is not materialism the only defensible position? What basis have we for our belief in freedom, in man's dignity, and in spiritual values generally? Have these not lost any real meaning for intelligent men? Should we not frankly abandon them and be content, our heads unbowed, to follow courageously, if hopelessly, the highest values that we know? One should not underrate the appeal of such a position, for it has a certain desperate dignity. If God has been abandoned, man is left. Though doomed at last to complete obliteration, man is a flame burning in the universal darkness and capable of high thoughts and noble deeds. To feed this flame so as to make life as rich and satisfying as possible seems to the humanists the only worthy goal, and they fight for a better world today, doomed though it may be tomorrow. But to nourish for long on such a belief any culture with ideals like ours seems difficult indeed. One has to admit, I think, that the tougher materialists are more logical and that their philosophy must inevitably move toward a far different end—to pessimism, frustration, and the decay of these great values we so much admire.

Further, if all this is so, what hope is there of raising a standard about which our divided Western world can ever unite in defense of its ancient heritage? Perhaps, indeed, this cannot be accomplished, but there is high hope that it can be, a hope to which not merely soft-headed sentimentalists but many of our clearest minds bear ever increasing witness. Scientific materialism, they maintain, is too simple a philosophy to cope with a universe vastly more complex than it seemed to our grandfathers. To be sure the most certain and indisputable knowledge of it is gained through our senses, and the progressive increase and clarification of this is the glory of the sciences. But in addition to an ability to gain such objective knowledge let us not forget that each of us also occupies a strategic position *inside* a living being and can thus come into immediate contact with other realities about which science as yet is able to tell us little. From that deep living core within, where matter, energy, and life are so inextricably mingled, there rises into consciousness a throng of emotions, passions, longings, loves, and hates, the whole gamut of inner urgencies that constitute the human *spirit*. Thence, and not from the cold calculations of reason, comes the motive power that drives us on. Whatever we may think of the origin of these emotions, however we may relate them to chemical and physical changes in our brain cells, they exist and offer access to qualities in the universe not to be gained in any other way, to realities less demonstrable than those of science but often no less vivid and significant.

One of these is beauty, the subtle quality that stirs in us a sense of glory and delight in particular sights or sounds or mental images. Beauty speaks to something original and primitive in men. What it is we do not clearly understand. It is not material or measurable but rather a harmonious pattern in nature, awakening in our hearts a warm response. Whatever our creed or philosophy we crave beauty and gladly agree that it is admirable and its enjoyment a high privilege.

Close to beauty is goodness. Through all history man at his best has yearned for what seemed high and right and fine, difficult to distinguish as these often proved to be from baser qualities. One may discount such longings and write them off as psychological conditioning, but they are universal and persistent. From such deep compulsions come those deeds of high humanity and devotion that our race has always most revered.

Beyond these two is a sensitivity to a still more profound quality that man has called divine. He is overwhelmed at times with a sense of something indescribably wonderful, a feeling of awe and reverence before the presence of what to all generations has seemed to be the spiritual core of the universe, a Being akin to himself, but infinitely greater and worthy of reverence and worship. Upon the validity of such experiences does all religion ultimately depend. They are the foundation for faith.

Our sensitivity to these qualities is not so much through the mind—though this too is involved—as through a deeper responsiveness, a more primitive, direct, instinctive, almost physiological relationship. To each of the three our response is much the same. Many who grant the reality of beauty and goodness will deny the existence of anything that could be called divine, but whatever can be said for the existence of one applies in essence to all three, for they merge into each other and seem aspects of the same great unity. Our longings for them may be distorted or denied, but the needle of the spirit always at last swings back toward the high qualities of which these feelings serve as witnesses. They exist. Men find them. We may widely disagree as to their character—as in the controversies today about poetry and the arts—but real they certainly are and with a reality which to most men is the deepest one of all. A recognition of the existence of these spiritual values and a strong allegiance to them has long distinguished Western idealism. This is its answer to a materialistic philosophy that scorns whatever is not based on tangible and measurable things.

How, then, can the contrasting values of science and idealism, of mind and spirit be knit into a common platform of belief without sacrificing that which is essential in each? How can we learn to live consistently in both worlds at the same time?

Such a platform surely must recognize the vast new insights that science has provided. No philosophy that challenges these, no deliberately unintelligent religion, no pretensions to human infallibility can hope to gain man's final assent. If we refuse to use our minds we become intellectual renegades and the truth is not in us. Where science can speak with certainty it must be heeded. The wisdom and experience of great souls in the past and the revelations of the truth which came to them and were transmitted to us are indeed worthy of reverence, but where these are in conflict with the clear findings of the sciences their authority must be rejected. Science, too, respects truth gained in the past but builds new truth upon it and never puts this into static creeds to bind its growth. "It would be a shock," said A. S. Eddington, "to come across a university where it was the practice of the students to recite adherence to Newton's laws of motion." Many long for a written guarantee of truth or for a church that can infallibly pronounce upon it, but truth can never thus be bound within the limits of a dogma.

The arrogance of materialistic dogmatism is equally to be avoided. Science itself is still far from solving its own problems, and the next century or two are bound to change not only its facts but doubtless its very concepts. This is no time for absolute certainties. How matter and spirit are related we cannot tell. Perhaps between them there may be the same sort of "complementarity" that Niels Bohr assumes between classical and quantum mechanics—two ways of looking at the same reality. But, in the midst of so much still unknown, to deny the reality of spiritual qualities or their value for an understanding of the universe is to follow the naive materialism of the nineteenth century. Life has a far richer background than such a philosophy ever can provide.

The extremists on both sides, of course, will refuse to stand on any common platform save by the unconditional surrender of their opponents. The very idea that emotional experiences can tell us anything about the universe beyond the content of our own consciousness is simply preposterous nonsense to the tough minded. At the other pole are those who regard a critical attitude toward "revealed" truth and a repudiation of dogmatic authority as a blow at the foundation of their deepest certainties. Both cannot be right, but they seem hopelessly unable to agree. And yet the disciplines of mind and of spirit, freed from the limitations imposed by their more extravagant proponents, are far from incompatible. Indeed, they can vigorously reinforce each other. Mind helps throw off the shackles of ancient ignorance, and spirit those of intellectual provincialism. If *both* could be recognized by all as avenues to truth and if each were respected by supporters of the other then for everyone there would be available a basis of fundamental agreement, limited enough to

exclude the extremes of difference that now divide us but with sufficient breadth to provide for the growth there, in profusion and diversity, of the many secondary faiths and beliefs that men now hold. Aside from mutual respect for such differences this platform should also require complete freedom for thought and expression, foster a critical attitude but recognize as well the frequent necessity for faith where so much is still unknown, and encourage both the spirit of adventurous exploration and a respect for the great ideas and discoveries of the past. Upon such a comprehensive foundation, based on the twin supports of mind and spirit—or, if you will, of science and religion—hosts of men now stand, and on it a common culture for all mankind could hopefully be erected.

To attain anything like general acceptance of such a broad basis for unity, however, will doubtless long remain impossible. It faces practical obstacles almost insurmountable. A proposal to bring under the same philosophical roof—broad though it might be—Communists and Roman Catholics and adherents of humanism and of Protestant fundamentalism needs only to be stated to show its present absurdity. Deeply rooted beliefs are so mixed with sentiment and prejudice that to alter them will require the utmost exercise of sympathy and wisdom. But if the high *affirmative* qualities of these philosophies could be combined and if there were nourished a mutual respect for the points where still they differ—the goal we seek would not be far away.

This, over the years, is a task for statesmanship in science, philosophy, and religion, toward tolerance, good will, and a sincere attempt to discover values in viewpoints different from our own. The schism which divides mankind into two great camps today and threatens his very survival is, at bottom, a consequence of the competition for his allegiance between the two great realms of mind and spirit. We should not regret this but rejoice in it, for these are the two elements that make a whole man. Out of the tension between them character is born. Man is half ape and half angel, half matter and half spirit. Herein lies his glory, his tragedy, and the possibility for him of tremendous things. Unless he learns to live in these two worlds he will never find unity or peace. Only by using the wisdom of both can he heal the breach that now brings strife into his ranks and discord into his heart. Only by trusting both can he fulfill his destiny.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 According to Sinnott, what is the central philosophic conflict in the world today?
- 2 In what respects does Sinnott believe that science has broken the former philosophic unity of the Western world?

- 3 What order of realities beyond those of the physical world does Sinnott say exists and how do we know?
- 4 What readjustments of ideas does he say will be necessary in order to establish a philosophy firmly on a middle ground between the extremes of materialism and dogmatism?
- 5 What difficulties does he anticipate in carrying out the course of action which he proposes?
- 6 Make a sentence outline of this essay which will indicate how it is organized
- 7 Has Sinnott clearly indicated the principal divisions of his subject matter? If so how? Are there places where the indications could be clearer?
- 8 Find specific instances in which Sinnott makes a special effort to enlist the reader's sympathies for his argument. What means does he use? Are they effective?
- 9 Is this essay composed largely of specific material or of generalizations about ideas? What dangers can you see in this type of writing?
- 10 What does the style of writing indicate as to the kind of audience to whom it is addressed?
- 11 To what extent is conflict used in this essay to gain interest?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Give any evidence which suggests that you yourself are living in the "two worlds" of which Sinnott speaks
2. Why is it difficult for people to give up beliefs they hold? Do you think they should?
- 3 Do you think that there is (or is not) an unavoidable conflict between the findings of natural science and the beliefs of religion?
- 4 Do you think it is possible for spiritual matters to be handled according to the method of science, or must the two be kept separate?

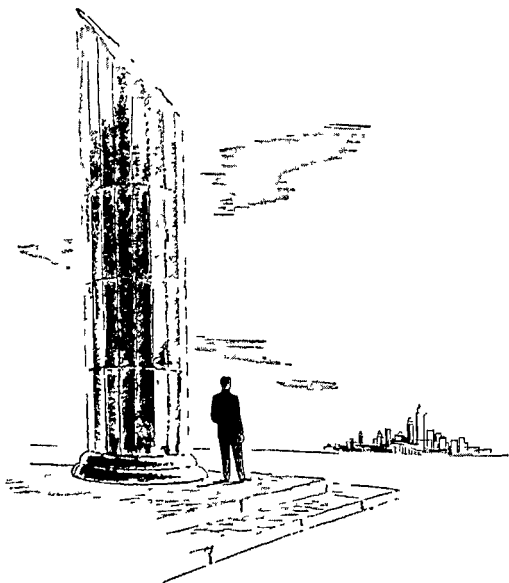
#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 A belief which I can never surrender
2. The connection between materialism and Communism
- 3 Science and religion are (or are not) in fundamental conflict.
- 4 The wide range of beliefs in American thought.



## *Chapter Ten*

# Civilization and Cycles



ALL THINGS MAKE ROOM FOR OTHERS  
AND NOTHING REMAINS STILL

HERACLITUS

## Introduction

We pride ourselves on being civilized. Presumably we have been subjected to influences which have helped to make us what we are. But what does it mean to be civilized? What are these influences? What is civilization? Other questions of compelling interest to us because they affect intimately our own lives also present themselves. Has our civilization reached a peak from which it must decline? Is there anything we can do to influence its future course or must we calmly await our fate? Such questions as these we shall find discussed in this chapter.

In the first selection, "The Meaning of Civilization," Sir Richard Livingstone, English classical scholar and educator who has appeared often on American campuses, explains some of the meanings and implications of the word *civilization*. From this essay we shall be able to obtain some fundamental concepts for use in thinking about the subject matter of this chapter. We shall also be able to clarify our ideas about the term *civilization* which is often used loosely. Livingstone also analyzes some aspects of our own civilization, and so raises some thought provoking questions.

One of these certainly concerns the future. If it were possible to predict accurately the course of events, problems of statecraft would be easier to solve and some reasonable certainty about the future might take the place of doubt. A number of attempts have been made to establish a science of history, notably by Henry Adams, Oswald Spengler, and Arnold Toynbee. Each is an attempt to establish the laws by which civilizations rise and fall. Because human affairs are infinitely complex and not susceptible to experimentation to the degree that physical nature is, the problem of discovering any historical laws which may exist is very difficult. It requires vast knowledge of past events and of the influences which have affected the lives of men. We cannot, therefore, in the present state of our knowledge expect exactness or even agreement among these historians—but their suggestions are often stimulating.

Some of the observers of the past believe there is discernible in civilizations a certain cycle of events, a kind of rhythm by which one

can foresee the future. Some of the scientist-historians who profess to detect such cycles in the history of other civilizations are very pessimistic about the state of ours. Oswald Spengler, for example, called his great work *The Decline of the West*. The analogies which have been made between what happened in other civilizations and what is happening in ours raises the question as to whether we can influence future events. Assuming that civilizations have in the past risen and fallen in cycles, are we in the grip of mechanistic forces which will determine our destiny regardless of our efforts, or is there something we can do about it?

Arnold J. Toynbee, who is one of the scientist historians and the author of the monumental *A Study of History*, considers this question in our second selection, "Does History Repeat Itself?" Toynbee is sure we have a chance to influence the course of events, and tells us that the future largely depends upon ourselves.

The other contributors to this section deal with more limited aspects of our civilization which would, however, contribute importantly to its rise and fall. Edgar Ansel Mowrer, famous American foreign correspondent, discusses in "The Third Man" the effects of types of men on the course of events. Dexter Perkins, scholarly student of history, reviews in "The American Attitude Toward War" the conditions under which Americans have gone to war and so throws light on our relation to one of the common characteristics of all civilizations.

Mowrer thinks that, like the Romans, we have reached a point where we place too high a premium on peace for our own good. He cites as one fact that we are not willing to make the sacrifices necessary to have the finest air force in the world. He thinks that although we have often fought we have never been "enthusiastic soldiers." Today we have carried our reluctance to such an extreme, he suggests, that we may need to make a conscious effort to develop the type of man who will do the grim business when it is necessary with the cold intelligence of a scientist wiping out the bacteria which are causing a plague.

Perkins brings us some exact information about the provocations which have led us to fight. For one thing, he reminds us that as a democratic people we have never been quick to open hostilities. "The record of the years indicates that while a single dramatic event may, of

course, intensify popular passion, there is always a train of circumstances behind the actual taking up of arms" Presidents Wilson and Roosevelt had to mobilize public opinion before they could mobilize armies. This is no doubt natural in a democratic country which has been used to the security of two great water barriers. For better or worse we have always been slow in preparing ourselves militarily.

In a sense these two articles tend to complement each other. Perkins brings the analytical powers of a trained historian to bear on our past record in order to make us aware of tendencies and to enable us to draw indicated lessons. Mowrer raises the question of whether, as the world changes, our past habits may not be dangerous. He also makes the important point that, in a world where some men will not hesitate to use force, it is dangerous to ignore them and that we had better cultivate the type of leader who can deal with them vigorously but intelligently.

On the whole the writers in this chapter are guardedly optimistic about our civilization and its prospects. Without concealing the gravity of our present situation, they see elements of hope in our increased knowledge of men and events. All of them have indicated areas of vital interest which require our intelligent attention.

## SIR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE

born 1880 teacher at Oxford University and classical scholar, was President of Corpus Christi College 1933 to 1950 and Vice Chancellor of Oxford 1944 to 1947 He has lectured also at many American universities Among his many books on classical subjects and on education are *On Education and Spirit of the Age* [ *The Meaning of Civilization* , Copyright 1953 by the Atlantic Monthly Company Boston 16 Massachusetts ]

### *The Meaning of Civilization*

#### I

The title of this article is "The Meaning of Civilization," but other questions have been in my mind as I wrote it—such questions as What will the future say of our civilization? How does it compare with other civilizations? What are its weaknesses, and what are its virtues? To answer these questions, we must know what we mean by the word, and *civilization* is not easy to define It is used apparently in different senses and applied to very different things We speak for instance of the civilization of the Mayas, of ancient Greece, of modern America But what have these three very different phenomena in common?

If we wish to find out the meaning of an idea, it is not a bad thing to study the history of the word that describes it Words are like coins After years of use they get worn and defaced, and the inscription on them becomes illegible But when they are first minted, it is clean and clear *Civilization* for instance It is a comparatively modern word Dr Johnson in 1776 declined to admit it in his Dictionary, preferring the old word *civility* The word *civility* is Latin, so is the idea which it expresses, it is a metaphor, *civilitas*, the character of people who are citizens, who live in cities, in organized states and societies, as opposed to primitive, barbarous peoples who do not The civilized man is the man who lives in a society with its richer, fuller life and who has the gifts that enable him to live in this life, which demands certain qualities of mind and character, and gives opportunities for development that the isolated life of the savage, living in a family or in a wandering tribe, cannot give We, by the way, should not use this metaphor to describe civilization Or, at any rate, should not make so emphatic a contrast between town and country, for in the last 150 years communications, radio, printing, have bridged the gulf which once separated them In Britain and in the United States and in most parts of Europe there is today as much *civilitas* in the country as in the city

Still, that definition throws some light on what civilization is, but we get further light if we observe the words used to describe it earlier still. For civilization existed long before the Romans coined the word *civilis*. The Greeks, who did more to make modern civilization possible than any people before or since, and who themselves had one of the greatest civilizations in history, had the thing, though they had not the name. They described it by the word *tame*. In their eyes a civilized man was tame, a tame creature as opposed to a wild or savage one. The Romans used a rather different term with the same idea behind it. When they wanted to express that idea, they used the word *cultivation*—the metaphor is from soil which is not left wild or barren.

There we have three metaphors, which are a guide to the nature of civilization. We are civilized in so far as we are tame rather than savage, cultivated soil rather than wild nature, the sort of people who can live in societies rather than the sort that do not and cannot. (Note, by the way, that all these metaphors apply rather to the human being than to the circumstances in which he lives, to the quality of his life, not to its comfort. This is an important point to which I shall return later.)

Perhaps the most suggestive of these metaphors is that from cultivation—the idea of civilization as a garden contrasted with wild woodland or barren heath—because it allows for the various meanings in which the word *civilization* is used. For civilization has many aspects, and in judging a civilization one takes into account a variety of phenomena, such as intellectual and scientific achievement, artistic quality, material well-being, and social organization. Civilizations are like gardens, some have few flowers, some many, here there is a magnificent show of roses or of orchids but little else, and here is a brilliant blaze of varied blossoms.

We talk of the civilization of the Mayas in Central America, though we know little of them beyond the fact that they had remarkable architecture and art, we do not know what was their intellectual level or their moral standards or their social organization. Yet we call them civilized. So again we should call the world revealed in the Norse and Icelandic sagas civilized, though it had neither art nor architecture nor science. It had, however, a remarkable literature and it had an organized social system. Civilization is always cultivation, the creation of a garden, but people put very different things in their gardens. Ancient Egypt had its garden, the Mayas had theirs, fifth century Athens had one idea, the Chinese a rather different one. All civilizations are gardens, but the flowers they contain differ, according to the natural powers and tastes of their creators.

What is the perfect civilization? What does the ideal garden grow? What tests should we apply if we wish to judge a civilization? I suggest

that we should observe what it makes of the savage animal, the wild nature, which it tries to tame and cultivate—Man It is concerned especially with three sides of him first with man as a being with an intellect, capable of knowing and understanding, able to create philosophy and science and all that we compendiously call thought, and civilization takes the savage in hand and produces Plato and Aristotle, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Whitehead, Archimedes, Newton, Faraday, Darwin, Pasteur, Einstein Secondly it is concerned with man as a being possessing imagination and the gift of creating art, again it takes the savage and in due time produces Raphael and Michelangelo and Leonardo, Homer and Dante and Shakespeare this being, who once was a half-naked wanderer in the forest or by the lakeside, builds the Parthenon or St. Paul's, paints the Sistine Chapel, writes the *Iliad* or *King Lear* Third, it is interested in man as a being with the gift of creating states and communities—hence the metaphor which appears in the word *civilization*—and civilization finds man living a savage life and teaches him how to make city-states, nations, empires, to knit continents together with organized transport and trade, to create these vast organizations, political, social, commercial, financial, which we take as matter of course, but whose intricate complexity the savage could neither conceive nor achieve

That is the work of civilization—this taming and cultivation of raw human nature it comes slowly, each generation making its contribution, drawn onward partly by selfish interests, the pursuit of wealth, comfort, power, but much more by a perception and pursuit of the first rate in all those three fields—the field of the intellect, of creative art, of social organization The highest civilization is the one which reaches the highest point in each of them—a perfect civilization of the human garden Where none of them are present, there is no civilization

It is no substitute for certain qualities of the human spirit—above all for vital energy, life No doubt mere vitality, mere energy, is an animal thing, often destructive But civilize it and you have something really great. It is the material from which great civilizations are made It is not enough merely to cultivate, the soil must have a natural richness and vigor If it gets exhausted, the yield is disappointing, however much it is dug and planted We talk sometimes of people becoming overcivilized the garden is cultivated but it produces sickly flowers, poor in quality That apparently is what happened to the Roman Empire—a failure of the vital power in the soil. One of the encouraging things about the modern world is that it is full of vitality

## 2

Let me now glance at an important question Does civilization cover the whole of life? What is its relation to religion and to morals? I



do not have space to deal adequately with these big problems and I will only say that history shows no instance of any civilization surviving long without a religion, or unless its existence is directed by something higher than the desire to satisfy material needs and to enjoy material comfort. As to morality, obviously men cannot live at all in societies without some virtues, and those who cannot live in a society are not civilized. But it is possible to have civilization with a quite modest supply of some important virtues. The Renaissance in Italy was one of the great ages of civilization, but it was not a notably religious age, nor was it remarkable for morals. There are some things, and very important ones, with which civilization has little or nothing to do. Were the disciples of Christ civilized—Peter, the sons of Zebedee, the fishermen of Galilee? *Civilization* is not the word which the thought of them brings to the mind.

St. Paul no doubt was a highly educated man, but many people in the audience to which he spoke at Athens would be regarded as more highly civilized than he was. And what of the majority of those congregations in Ephesus, Philippi, and Corinth to whom his letters were written? He himself says of them "You see your calling, brethren, how not many wise men after the flesh are called but God chose the foolish things of the world that He might put to shame them that are wise." And all of us have known poor, uneducated people who have qualities by the side of which civilization with all its artistic, scientific, and intellectual interests seem a lesser thing.

My own view is that civilization is the development of the purely human capacities in man—great capacities, but less great than the religious experience which opens to him an even ampler world, even greater issues. Tolstoy defined religion as "a relation accordant with reason and knowledge which man establishes with the infinite life about him and is such as binds his life to that infinity and guides his conduct." Religion in this sense, though it is entirely consistent with civilization, seems to be different from it, and it can be and has been found apart from civilization.

Yet in all civilizations, except purely material ones, there is an element which is allied to religion—the element of disinterestedness. By disinterestedness I mean the frame of mind in which a person subordinates his personal interests and himself to something outside him whose superior claim he recognizes. Religion is the supreme example of it, but it appears in all the higher forms of civilization. The thinker, the scientist, does his work not for the sake of money or fame—if he thinks of them at all they are not the force which drives his energies and which he might find it difficult to define. The same is often true in business. Certainly it is true of all art, music, and literature. They may bring their creators money, often they do not. Milton received 10 pounds for *Paradise Lost*. Mozart

was buried in a pauper's grave, Cervantes died in great poverty But all artists (using that word in a wide sense) are moved by an ideal, an inner vision, which has nothing material about it, which is disinterested For, like religion, it comes from some force of the spirit outside man but working through him Take the following lines, which at first reading one might suppose to be a religious poem, but which actually describe the emotions of Kipling reflecting on his work

My new-cut ashlar takes the light  
Where crimson blank the windows flare  
By my own work before the night,  
Great Overseer, I make my prayer

If there be good in that I wrought,  
Thy Hand compelled it, Master, Thine —  
Where I have failed to meet Thy Thought  
I know, through Thee, the blame was mine

One instant's toil to Thee denied  
Stands all Eternity's offence  
Of that I did with Thee to guide,  
To Thee, through Thee, be excellence

The depth and dream of my desire,  
The bitter paths wherein I stray —  
Thou knowest Who hast made the Fire,  
Thou knowest Who hast made the Clay

One stone the more swings into place  
In that dread Temple of Thy worth  
It is enough that, through Thy Grace,  
I saw nought common on Thy Earth.<sup>1</sup>

These lines illustrate how narrow can be the boundary between religion and art—if indeed it exists at all.

### 3

And now we come to our own civilization. In order to judge it, consider it under the various aspects which I mentioned earlier—intellectual and artistic achievement, *civitas* or the quality of its social life, material well being, and first take the last of these, material well being, in which we far surpass all earlier ages. If this made civilization, we would be the most civilized people who have existed on the earth. But whatever its value in other respects, its importance to civilization can be exaggerated. Athens, the Roman Empire, the city-states of medieval Italy, ancient China, had never heard of steam or electricity and were without

conveniences which today any workingman can command, yet these peoples are justly regarded as high points of civilization

I am not arguing against the value of material progress, but it has two faces. Think of an air raid. Could anything be more completely a product of modern civilization? In the air those wonderful birds of metal flying at hundreds of miles an hour under human control, carrying small iron containers which can set a city on fire and kill thousands of its inhabitants, while on the ground other men, sweeping the night and the wide spaces of the sky with searchlight and gun, detect and destroy their enemy. What miracles of human intellect made both the attack and the defense possible? It is eminently part of that material civilization which we justly admire. But it is clear that material civilization can be a danger as well as a benefit to its possessors.

Nor is it merely that airplanes and explosives and atomic energy may destroy us, a less spectacular but more imminent risk is that they may bewilder, distract, and barbarize us. I have mentioned one unfortunate use of the internal combustion engine, let me call attention to another, lesser, and less obvious evil for which it is responsible and which can be seen on any highway in Europe or America when a car or motor coach passes with tourists. They are bent on seeing the scenery. But you can no more see scenery at 20 or 30 or 40 miles an hour than you could see a picture gallery by running through it. Beauty cannot be seen in bulk, to run one's eye over it is not to see it, it needs time and leisure to absorb and be absorbed by it. Wordsworth, wandering "lonely as a cloud," saw more in an afternoon walk than we see in a journey from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In so far, we have actually lost by the opportunities for locomotion which progress has given us, and Horace's sarcastic comment on his age, written 1900 years ago, applies to us with infinitely more force. *Navibus atque quadrigis petimus bene vivere*—"We look to cars and yachts for the good life."

What is the relation of material progress to civilization? Is it a friend or an enemy? I should reply that it is a friend which, if we are not careful, may become an enemy. Clearly it is a good thing to have material conveniences—quick communications, cheap production, printing, plumbing, and the rest. That point is too obvious to require stressing.

And apart from the uses of material inventions to ourselves, they bring civilization within the reach of those who without them, would be excluded from it. Printing has brought knowledge and wisdom (and some less desirable gifts) to millions who, before its discovery, were without access to it. Compare the life of the masses before and after machinery came. Contrast the coolie drawing a rickshaw for sixteen hours a day with a taxi driver. In the age before the machine the life of the poor was

a drudgery which left little time or energy for anything beyond, then civilization was the perquisite of a small class, today it is a possibility within the reach of all

And there is a further point about these material instruments and equipment of our life. They help to make our civilization, but at the same time the making of them is part of the making of the human garden. It is an advantage to have radio and refrigeration and bathrooms and telephones and the rest, and we are sometimes proud of them as if they were fine flowers of our life. That of course is not so. The possession of them is no credit to us, it shows no more than that we have enough money to buy them. But they *are* a credit to those whose intelligence and skill created them, they are an inanimate witness to the powers of man.

Who could go into a big factory without reflecting how much human intelligence is embodied both in its machines and its organization? Who can go down to a shipyard when a liner is ready for launching and see the men in the yard busy with the final preparations, looking like ants beside this vast creation towering above on its slips, without admiration for the pigmy humans that yet are able to build and control something so enormous and complicated? This is the miraculous achievement of beings who five thousand years ago were the savage inhabitants of caves and woods. The greatness of a ship is not merely that she will carry us safely and quickly across the oceans, but that she is human intelligence embodied. Her existence is more remarkable than her uses. She is a fine flower when the human garden has grown.

I have dwelt so long on the material aspect of our civilization because it is responsible for our greatest problems and because we are liable to hold one of two mistaken views about it. There is the view of those who are so dazzled by its achievements that they identify it with civilization and suppose that we are civilized because of our material progress and advantages. Then there is the opposite view of those who, noticing some of its results and some of the uses to which it is put, go, like Ruskin or William Morris or Edward Carpenter, to the opposite extreme and wish they could be rid of the whole thing. I do not know which of these views is more mistaken. Probably the first—the confusing of civilization with material progress. The right view is that material civilization is of value both in itself and because it represents a great human achievement—a part of the cultivation of the human garden. But it has its dangers and we have not always avoided them.

#### 4

If mastery of the material world were civilization, ours would be the most civilized age in history. How will it rank if, passing from its

material aspects, we consider the other elements which constitute a civilization. imaginative quality revealed in literature and art, intellectual activities, *civilitas* or social and political life? There is today a greater quantity of competent writing at a good level than in any preceding age—an extensive tableland without any great peaks breaking the skyline, but our literature, if we judge it by universal standards, does not rise into the first class we have nothing comparable to the drama of fifth century Athens or of sixteenth century England or seventeenth century France, we have no novelists who can rank with Tolstoy or Dostoevsky or with Scott or Dickens, we have no great historians, and a hundred years hence will any of our poetry be read except in anthologies? Possibly our best imaginative work is in art, but even there we have no Phidias or Raphael or Michelangelo or Leonardo, nor have we anything to challenge the Parthenon or Santa Sophia or the medieval cathedral unless it is those buildings on the western approaches to New York and on the lake front of Chicago which embody the spirit of the age in forms of majestic and austere beauty

Turning to the purely intellectual aspect of our civilization, we have at the moment a philosophy of little importance even for its own time, and in pure science, as in literature, we have a remarkable diffusion of good work. But we also have and have had some creative minds of the highest quality, such as Max Planck, Rutherford, and Einstein. In applied science no age can compare with us, and in general one might say that the characteristic achievement of the modern world is the effective mobilization and organization of intellectual effort in every field. But in artistic and literary quality our civilization will, I believe, certainly rank below that of fifth and fourth century Athens, and of fourteenth and fifteenth century Italy.

That brings me to an important practical question. Can a democracy be civilized? I have deliberately put the question provocatively, but it is a real one, and all democracies need to consider it. Of course very few people can be creators in the field of art or of the intellect. Our task, the task of the intelligent public, is to honor and appreciate what the few create, to know, or at least wish to know, what is really first rate in literature, art, architecture, music, in science and the world of thought, in all the activities that make civilization. But are the masses capable of such discrimination? And if not, shall we not have a nation where an elite is civilized but the rest of the people is not? Have we not something of the sort today? Look at some of our popular newspapers. Or ask yourselves what idea an archaeologist would form of us if, a thousand years hence, he dug up our advertisements, which presumably give a fair idea of the

tastes and interests of the ordinary man, and tried to form an idea of this age from them. Would it be a favorable idea?

Democracy is the highest form of political government, but on the cultural side, it is exposed to grave weakness. Call the masses into power, and automatically you will find the national culture molded by their interests and tastes. They will expect, and plenty of people will be ready to supply, the kind of music and art and radio and films and reading which is to their taste, and there is at least a risk that standards will quickly decline to the second- and third rate. I can mention one field in which this has happened in my own country in my lifetime. When I was a boy no daily paper was published in London of the level of those that are read by the great mass of the population today. In many points the modern cheap English papers are not so bad (I have seen worse in America), but I cannot think that they are papers which really civilized people would habitually read.

## 5

How can we avoid this danger—that a democracy will find itself divided on the one hand into an elite, who know what is good literature, good music, good journalism, and so on—who appreciate excellence in the world of the intellect—and on the other hand a mass who do not, who in these fields have no judgment or discrimination and who see no difference between the first rate and the third rate? Must we accept it as inevitable and resign ourselves to the majority being in these respects uncivilized or half-civilized? That is substantially the position today. Plato thought it inevitable and divided his citizens into three classes—a small class, creative minds who know the meaning of excellence in all the forms and activities of life, a larger class, who follow their guidance and in so far share their knowledge, and a majority who have their function in the state as producers but who have no real idea what civilization in its full sense means.

I am sure that one should not resign oneself to so defeatist a view. Mere political equality is essential but it is not enough. Burke had the right conception of the state, when he said that it should be a partnership in all science, in all art, in every virtue, and in every perfection.

But how are we to secure this? We have not secured it yet. Education should give the answer. But we have universal education and so far the answer has been dusty. That suggests that there is something wrong with our education—that it has not addressed itself to this side of its task, and this I believe to be so. I cannot discuss in detail what we might do about it. But I will suggest one thing. A fundamental principle of education should be to make the pupil realize the meaning of excellence, of the

first rate, and to send him out of school and college persuaded that it is his business to learn what is first rate and to pursue it—not only in the job by which he earns his living but in all the great fields of life and above all in living itself. I would also try to give the pupil at school a better idea than he sometimes gets of what is first rate in literature, architecture, music, art—and, above all, of what is first rate in conduct and life. Then we might get nearer to creating a democracy which believes in, desires, and recognizes, where it cannot achieve, excellence in all the noblest activities.

I think this would do something. But I would go further. In many ways I mistrust the state and I should scrutinize carefully any extension of its powers. But I should like to put under its supervision, or rather under the supervision of independent public corporations, those cultural activities which have great educational importance. I would not leave them to chance or to exploitation for private profit.

To come to a practical point, I should like to see radio, TV, and the films controlled, not by the state directly, but by some public body. These three are today probably the most influential instruments of public education, for they are at work on most of us throughout our lives, the artists and technicians who produce them are gifted people who know their job thoroughly, they move us, as unfortunately education in school and college often does not, and their influence is the greater because for the most part we do not realize it. I do not think that forces of this kind should be directed in the last resort by motives of private gain.

I have suggested that in art and in literature other ages have reached higher levels than we. But there is one province of civilization in which we may be found, when our history is written, to have achieved more than any other epoch, the province of *civitas* in the narrow sense of the word—in our social and political ideals. I am not thinking of political democracy, which is as old as Athens, where the poorest and most humbly born citizen had political equality with the richest and most aristocratic, and where the Assembly in which all issues of peace and war were decided, and any member of the citizen body could hear the debate, take part in it, and give his vote, afforded a better political education than any since devised, though it did not lead to efficient government. But I believe that at no age of the world has the social conscience been so awake as now. That is not to say that it might not be more awake still. But we have got rid of the institution of slavery which defaced Greek civilization. This improvement was made possible by the machine, which has replaced the slave, but in part it is due to the growth of a social conscience. We have recognized the duty of giving equal opportunity to all—a notable instance is our nation-wide education—and we have attempted to maintain a

minimum standard of living by the social services. In these points we have achieved far more than the Greeks or any other people of the past. We have a richer idea of *civilitas*, and in that province we have a higher civilization.

But an even greater advance is an extension of that idea. Today we see the dawn, the very faint dawn, of a new political conception, partly anticipated in the idea of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and developed since the war on different lines by the United States, which has adopted it as a policy, and has in the Marshall Plan and in other ways made practical sacrifices for it. It is the conception of a world whose peoples, varying in language, traditions, culture, and political institutions, yet feel themselves fundamentally one, united, beneath all their differences, by a common humanity and cooperating in the pursuit of a common goal. That is something new.

Unmistakably, the next great advance for humanity is international co-operation, not the casual flirtations or transient liaisons between states which have hitherto been our nearest approach to it, but something corresponding to that power of living together, that fundamental harmony, which holds England or America or any healthy nation together in spite of internal tensions and of differences of interest and opinion. Mankind has never undertaken a more formidable task. It will not be accomplished by setting up international machinery, though this is indispensable, still less by pious aspirations, pessimistic complaints, or edifying speeches. It is a preparation of the spirit, a remolding of the inner man, that is required—not only in one or two nations, but in all.

The best preparation is to take seriously the second of Christ's great commandments, to love our neighbors as ourselves and to define our neighbor as He defined him, or, as William Temple more explicitly put it, "My neighbour is anyone with whom I have anything to do, even by accident and even though he is the kind of person that I naturally hate and despise." The vision of a new political order is fundamentally Christian. It is of course possible to base the ideal of a world society—which is something different from a world state—on utilitarian grounds, because without it civilization will be torn, and possibly destroyed, by war, or because it is the nearest road to the prosperity and peace of mankind. But utility is a plausible rather than a powerful motive, for the interests of the individual often diverge, or seem to diverge, from the interests of the whole. A surer basis, a more dynamic motive force, for its realization can be found in Christianity, of which it is the logical conclusion.

It is foreshadowed in the words of Christ: "You have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy, but I tell you, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who



persecute and insult you, that so you may be true sons of your Father in heaven, whose sun rises on the evil and equally on the good, whose rain falls on the just and equally on the unjust" How easy to quote those words! How difficult even to approach practicing them!

We have far to go the ideal has to be translated into practice Nationalism, in its many forms, will oppose and retard progress, and many will still reiterate the question of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The new conception of international relations has not penetrated into our normal way of thinking or become an automatic reaction to political problems It involves a transformation of our natural outlook But this is the way in which the world is destined to move, and the outlook of man has undergone more astonishing transformations since he first appeared on the earth Anyhow the first shoots of a new plant in the human garden are visible above the soil The age which brings it to flower will have done for civilization at least as much as any of its predecessors

<sup>1</sup> My New-cut Ashlar" is from *Life's Handicaps* copyright 1890 by Rudyard Kipling and is reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc. and Mrs George Bainbridge.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Indicate in a sentence each the subject matter of the five sections.
- 2 What three metaphors does Livingstone derive from the history of the word *civilization*? How does each help to make clear an aspect of the word?
- 3 What is the final test of a civilization? With what three sides of man is it concerned?
- 4 To what extent is *civilization* an inclusive term? What areas of man's life are not included in it?
- 5 Explain what is contributed to civilization by material progress
- 6 Indicate and explain the special problems which arise with respect to civilization in a democracy
- 7 In what respect is our modern civilization probably outstanding?
- 8 What new advance in civilization now seems possible? On what basis must it be launched?
- 9 What effect is obtained by the organization of the essay into five parts? Is the effect desirable?
- 10 Point out the devices used by the author to keep the reader aware of his line of development.
- 11 At the beginning of the essay Livingstone poses a number of questions What is the purpose of these questions? Are they effective?
- 12 This essay is largely a definition of a word *civilization* How is the definition developed? Note instances in which Livingstone goes beyond definition
- 13 Why does Livingstone keep his discussion of our social and political ideas until near the end of his essay? What effect is achieved?

- 14 Comment on the effectiveness of discussing the *future* extension of the idea of *civilitas* at the very end of the essay
- 15 What evidences do you find in the essay that Livingstone is well qualified to handle this subject?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Discuss the evidences of vitality or the lack of it in the United States today
- 2 In what practical and specific ways can we make use of our material progress in furthering true civilization?
- 3 Does your own education sufficiently emphasize the necessity of excellence? Explain fully and specifically
- 4 Do you think that the possibilities of international cooperation are really as bright as Livingstone seems to think? Why?
- 5 Discuss the influences which work for and against civilization in the United States

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Democracies can (can never) be civilized
- 2 Disinterestedness as an element in American life
- 3 The search for excellence
- 4 TV the radio, and the movies should (should not) be publicly controlled
- 5 In the United States there is no difference between city and country
- 6 The state of civilization in the United States
- 7 A solid basis for international cooperation
- 8 The best way to see the country

## ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

born 1889 British historian is best known for his six volume work *A Study of History*, which in a one volume abridgment became a best seller Among his other books on international relations is *The World and the West*. [From *Civilization on Trial*, by Arnold J Toynbee, Copyright 1948 by Oxford University Press Inc]

## Does History Repeat Itself?

Does history repeat itself? In our Western world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this question used to be debated as an academic exercise The spell of well being which our civilization was enjoying at the time had dazzled our grandfathers into the quaint pharisaical notion that they were 'not as other men are', they had come to believe that our Western society was exempt from the possibility of falling into those mis-

takes and mishaps that have been the ruin of certain other civilizations whose history, from beginning to end, is an open book. To us, in our generation, the old question has rather suddenly taken on a new and very practical significance. We have awakened to the truth (how, one wonders, could we ever have been blind to it?) that Western man and his works are no more invulnerable than the now extinct civilizations of the Aztecs and the Incas, the Sumerians and the Hittites. So to-day, with some anxiety, we are searching the scriptures of the past to find out whether they contain a lesson that we can decipher. Does history give us any information about our own prospects? And, if it does, what is the burden of it? Does it spell out for us an inexorable doom, which we can merely await with folded hands—resigning ourselves, as best we may, to a fate that we cannot avert or even modify by our own efforts? Or does it inform us, not of certainties, but of probabilities, or bare possibilities, in our own future? The practical difference is vast, for, on this second alternative, so far from being stunned into passivity, we should be roused to action. On this second alternative, the lesson of history would not be like an astrologer's horoscope, it would be like a navigator's chart, which affords the seafarer who has the intelligence to use it a much greater hope of avoiding shipwreck than when he was sailing blind, because it gives him the means, if he has the skill and courage to use them, of steering a course between charted rocks and reefs.

It will be seen that our question needs defining before we plunge into an attempt to answer it. When we ask ourselves 'Does history repeat itself?' do we mean no more than 'Does history turn out to have repeated itself, on occasions, in the past?' Or are we asking whether history is governed by inviolable laws which have not only taken effect in every past case to which they have applied but are also bound to take effect in every similar situation that may arise in the future? On this second interpretation, the word 'does' would mean 'must', on the other interpretation it would mean 'may'. On this issue, the writer of the present article may as well put his cards on the table at once. He is not a determinist in his reading of the riddle of human life. He believes that where there is life there is hope, and that, with God's help, man is master of his own destiny, at least to some extent in some respects.

But as soon as we have taken our stand on this issue between freedom and necessity that is raised by the ambiguous word 'does', we find ourselves called upon to define what we mean by the word 'history'. If we have to limit the field of history to events that are wholly within the control of human wills, then, to be sure, for a non-determinist no difficulty would arise. But do such events ever actually occur in real life? In our personal experience, when we are making a decision, do we not always

find ourselves only partly free and partly bound by past events and present facts in our own life and in our social and physical environment? Is not history itself, in the last analysis, a vision of the whole universe on the move in the four-dimensional framework of space-time? And, in this all embracing panorama, are there not many events that the most staunch believer in the freedom of the human will would admit, as readily as the most thorough-going determinist, to be inexorably recurrent and precisely predictable?

Some events of this undisputedly recurrent predictable order may have little apparent bearing upon human affairs—as, for example, the repetitions of history in nebulae outside the system of the Milky Way. There are, however, some very obvious cyclic movements in physical nature that do affect human affairs in the most intimate fashion—as, for example, the recurrent predictable alternations of day and night and of the seasons of the year. The day-and night cycle governs all human work, it dictates the schedules of the transportation systems of our cities, sets the times of their rush hours, and weighs on the minds of the commuters whom it shuttles to and fro, twice in every twenty-four hours, between 'dormitory' and 'workshop'. The cycle of the seasons governs human life itself by governing our food supply.

It is true that man, by taking thought, can win a measure of freedom from these physical cycles that is beyond the reach of birds and beasts. Though the individual cannot break the tyranny of the day-and-night cycle by leading a waking life for twenty four hours in the day, like the legendary Egyptian Pharaoh Mycerinus, human society can achieve Mycerinus' mythical feat collectively by a planned co-operation and a division of labour. Industrial plants can be operated for twenty-four hours in the day by successive shifts of workers, and the labours of workers who work by day can be prepared for and be followed up by the labours of other workers who rest by day and work by night. The tyranny of the seasons, again, has been broken by a Western society that has expanded from the northern temperate zone into the tropics and the southern temperate zone and has devised a technique of refrigeration. Nevertheless, these triumphs of man's mind and will over the tyranny of the two physical cycles of the day and the year are comparatively small gains for human freedom, remarkable though these triumphs are. On the whole, these recurrent predictable events in physical nature remain masters of human life—even at the present level of Western man's technology—and they show their mastery by subduing human affairs, as far as their empire over them extends, to their own recurrent predictable pattern.

But are there, perhaps, human acts, in other fields of action, that are not—or, at any rate not so completely—under physical nature's control?

Let us examine this question in a familiar concrete case. When, in the last days of April 1865, the horses that, in the first days of that month, had been the cavalry and artillery horses of the Army of Northern Virginia, were being driven behind the plough by the men who, at the beginning of that April, had been General Lee's cavalymen and artillerymen, those men and horses were once again performing an annually recurrent agricultural operation which they themselves had performed a number of times before in their lives and which predecessors of theirs, in the Old World before Europeans discovered the New World, and in other societies before our Western society's birth, had been performing, year by year, for some five or six thousand years past. The invention of ploughing is coeval with the species of society that we call civilizations, and pre-plough methods of agriculture—likewise governed by the year cycle—were already in use for perhaps an equal length of time before that, during the neolithic dawn by which the sunrise of civilization was heralded. In the spring of 1865, agriculture in the ex-Confederate States of North America was governed by the seasons very rigidly. A few weeks' delay, and the season would have been too late—with the disastrous consequence that the food-producing capacities of those horses and men would have been lost to the community for a whole year longer.

Thus, in the last days of April 1865, the horses and men of the former Army of Northern Virginia were performing a historical act—the spring ploughing—which had repeated itself, by that date, some five or six thousand times at least, and was still repeating itself in 1947. (In that year the writer of this article witnessed the spring ploughing in Kentucky, and noted the farmers' anxiety when, in the middle of that April, their work was interrupted by heavy rainfall.)

But what about the history that General Lee's horses and men were making, not at the end of April, but at the beginning? Is the kind of history that is represented by the last act of the Civil War a kind that repeats itself—as ploughing and commuting repeat themselves owing to their close and obvious dependence on recurrent predictable cycles in physical nature? Are we not confronted here with a kind of human action that is more or less independent of physical cycles and is capable of overriding them? Suppose that General Lee had not found himself constrained to capitulate till June 1865? Or suppose that, General Lee having capitulated when he did, General Grant had not been moved to make his celebrated concession of allowing the Confederate soldiers who had just laid down their arms to take their horses back with them to their farms, notwithstanding the contrary provision in the terms of surrender that had just been agreed upon? Would not either of these hypothetical man-made variations on the actual course of historical events have prevented history

from repeating itself in the Southern States in the spring ploughing of 1865?

The province of history that we are considering now is one that used to be treated as the whole field of history before the provinces of economic and social history were opened up. In this old-fashioned field of battles and policies, captains and kings, does history turn out to have repeated itself as it does in fields of human activity that are manifestly governed by cycles in the movement of physical nature? Was the Civil War, for instance, a unique event, or do we find other historical events that display sufficient similarity and affinity to it to warrant us in treating it and them as so many representatives of a class of events in which history has repeated itself at least to some extent? The present writer inclines to this latter view.

The crisis represented in American history by the Civil War was, surely, repeated in a significant sense in the contemporary crisis in German history that is represented by the Bismarckian wars of 1864-71. In both cases, an imperfect political union had threatened to dissolve altogether. In both cases, the issue between the dissolution of the union and its effective establishment was decided by war. In both cases, the partisans of effective union won, and, in both, one of the causes of their victory was *their technological and industrial superiority over their opponents*. In both, finally, the victory of the cause of union was followed by a great industrial expansion which turned both the post bellum United States and the Second German Reich into formidable industrial competitors of Great Britain. And here we have hit upon another repetition of history, for, throughout the century ending about 1870, the industrial revolution in Great Britain might have appeared to be a unique historical event, whereas, since 1870, it has come to appear, in its true light, as simply the earliest instance of an economic transformation which was eventually to occur likewise in a number of other Western countries and in some non-Western countries too. Moreover, if we shift our attention from the economic common feature of industrialization to the political common feature of federal union, we shall see the history of the United States and Germany at this point repeating itself once again in the history of a third country—in this case not Great Britain but Canada, whose constituent provinces entered into their present federation in 1867, two years after the *de facto* re-establishment of the unity of the United States in 1865 and four years before the foundation of the Second German Reich in 1871.

In the formation, in the modern Western world, of a number of federal unions, and in the industrialization of these and other countries, we see history repeating itself in the sense of producing a number of

more or less contemporary examples of the same human achievement. The contemporaneity of the different instances is, however, no more than approximate. The industrial revolution occurred as an apparently unique event in Great Britain at least two generations before its occurrence in America, and Germany proved it to be a repetitive phenomenon. The insecurely welded pre Civil-War United States had existed for 'four score and seven years,' and the ramshackle post Napoleonic German Confederation for half a century, before the crucial events of the eighteen-sixties proved that federal union was a repetitive pattern which was to recur not only in Canada but in Australia, South Africa, and Brazil. Contemporaneity is not an essential condition for the repetition of history on the political and cultural plane of human affairs. The historical events that repeat themselves may be strictly contemporary or they may overlap in time or they may be entirely non-contemporaneous with one another.

The picture remains the same when we turn to the consideration of the greatest human institutions and experiences that are known to us: the civilizations in their births and growths, their breakdowns, declines, and falls, the higher religions in their foundation and evolution. Measured by our subjective personal measuring rod of the average span of the memory of a single human being who lives to a normal old age, the time interval that divides our present generation from the date of the emergence of the Sumerian civilization in the fourth millennium B.C. or from the date of the beginning of the Christian era itself seems, no doubt, a very long one. Yet it is infinitesimally small on the objective time scale that has recently been given to us by the discoveries of our geologists and astronomers. Our modern Western physical science tells us that the human race has been in existence on this planet for at least 600,000 and perhaps a million years, life for at least 500 million and perhaps 800 million years, and the planet itself for possibly 2000 million years. On this time scale the last five or six thousand years that have seen the births of civilizations, and the last three or four thousand years that have seen the births of higher religions are periods of such infinitesimal brevity that it would be impossible to show them, drawn to scale, on any chart of the whole history of this planet up to date. On this true time scale, these events of 'ancient history' are virtually contemporary with our own lifetime, however remote they may appear to be when viewed through the magnifying lens of the individual human midjet's subjective mental vision.

The conclusion seems to be that human history does turn out, on occasions, to have repeated itself up to date in a significant sense even in spheres of human activity in which the human will is at its nearest to

being master of the situation and is least under the domination of cycles in physical nature. Must we go on to conclude that, after all, the determinists are right and that what looks like free will is an illusion? In the present writer's opinion, the correct conclusion is just the opposite. As he sees it, this tendency towards repetition, which thus asserts itself in human affairs, is an instance of one of the well known devices of the creative faculty. The works of creation are apt to occur in bunches—a bunch of representatives of a species, a bunch of species of a genus. And the value of such repetitions is, after all, not difficult to discern. Creation could hardly make any headway at all if each new form of creature were not represented by numerous eggs distributed among numerous baskets. How else could a creator, human or divine, provide himself with sufficient materials for bold and fruitful experiment and with effective means of retrieving inevitable failures? If human history repeats itself, it does so in accordance with the general rhythm of the universe, but the significance of this pattern of repetition lies in the scope that it gives for the work of creation to go forward. In this light, the repetitive element in history reveals itself as an instrument for freedom of creative action, and not as an indication that God and man are the slaves of fate.

What is the bearing of these conclusions about history in general on the particular question of the prospects of our Western civilization? As we observed at the beginning of this paper, the Western world has become rather suddenly very anxious about its own future, and our anxiety is a natural reaction to the formidableness of the situation in which we now find ourselves. Our present situation is formidable indeed. A survey of the historical landscape in the light of our existing knowledge shows that, up to date, history has repeated itself about twenty times in producing human societies of the species to which our Western society belongs, and it also shows that, with the possible exception of our own, all these representatives of the species of society called civilizations are already dead or moribund. Moreover, when we study the histories of these dead and moribund civilizations in detail, and compare them with one another, we find indications of what looks like a recurring pattern in the process of their breakdowns, declines, and falls. We are naturally asking ourselves to-day whether this particular chapter of history is bound to repeat itself in our case. Is that pattern of decline and fall in store for us in our turn, as a doom from which no civilization can hope to escape? In the writer's opinion, the answer to this question is emphatically in the negative. The effort to create a new manifestation of life—be it a new species of mollusc or a new species of human society—seldom or never succeeds at the first attempt. Creation is not so easy



an enterprise as that. It wins its ultimate successes through a process of trial and error, and accordingly the failure of previous experiments, so far from dooming subsequent experiments to fail in their turn in the same way, actually offers them their opportunity of achieving success through the wisdom that can be gained from suffering. Of course a series of previous failures does not guarantee success to the next comer, any more than it condemns him to be a failure in his turn. There is nothing to prevent our Western civilization from following historical precedent, if it chooses, by committing social suicide. But we are not doomed to make history repeat itself, it is open to us, through our own efforts, to give history, in our case, some new and unprecedented turn. As human beings, we are endowed with this freedom of choice, and we cannot shuffle off our responsibility upon the shoulders of God or nature. We must shoulder it ourselves. It is up to us.

What shall we do to be saved? In politics, establish a constitutional co-operative system of world government. In economics, find working compromises (varying according to the practical requirements of different places and times) between free enterprise and socialism. In the life of the spirit, put the secular super-structure back onto religious foundations. Efforts are being made in our Western world to day to find our way towards each of these goals. If we had arrived at all three of them, we might fairly feel that we had won our present battle for our civilization's survival. But these are, all of them, ambitious undertakings, and it will call for the hardest work and the highest courage to make any progress at all towards carrying any one of them through to achievement.

Of the three tasks, the religious one is, of course, in the long run by far the most important, but the other two are the more urgent, because, if we were to fail in these in the short run, we might lose for ever our opportunity of achieving a spiritual rebirth which cannot just be whistled for at our convenience, but will only come, if it comes at all, at the unhurrying pace at which the deepest tides of spiritual creation flow.

The political task is the most urgent of all. The immediate problem here is a negative one. Faced, as we are, with the prospect that—given our present interdependence and present weapons—the world is now on the eve of being unified politically by one means or another, we have to stave off the disastrous denouement of unification by force of arms, the familiar method of the forcible imposition of a *Pax Romana* which is probably the line of least resistance for the resolution of the formidable political forces in whose grip our own world finds itself to-day. Can the United States and the other Western countries manage to co-operate with the Soviet Union through the United Nations? If the United Nations organization could grow into an effective system of world gov-

ernment, that would be much the best solution of our political crux. But we have to reckon with the possibility of this enterprise's failing, and to be ready, should it fail, with an alternative to fall back upon. Could the United Nations split, *de facto*, into two groups without a breach of the peace? And, supposing that the whole face of the planet could be partitioned peacefully into an American and a Russian sphere, could two worlds on one planet live side by side on a footing of 'non-violent non-co-operation' for long enough to give a chance for a gradual mitigation of the present differences in their social and ideological climates? The answer to this question would depend on whether, on these terms, we could buy the time needed to carry out our economic task of finding a middle way between free enterprise and socialism.

These riddles may be hard to read, but they do tell us plainly what we most need to know. They tell us that our future largely depends upon ourselves. We are not just at the mercy of an inexorable fate.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What is Toynbee's view on the problem of whether history *must* repeat itself?
- 2 What reasons does he give for concluding that human history does turn out, on some occasions, to have repeated itself in a significant sense?
- 3 What reasons are there to fear that our own civilization must die? What reasons are there against such a belief?
- 4 What does Toynbee believe we must do if our civilization is to be saved?
- 5 For what purposes does Toynbee use questions in his essay?
- 6 Find instances of the use of definition in the development of the essay. Are these definitions necessary?
- 7 What purpose does the example of the Confederate horses serve in this essay?
- 8 Early in the essay Toynbee states his own attitude toward the question raised by the essay. What is the effect of this disclosure on the reader as he follows the discussion?
- 9 How is conflict used to stimulate interest in this essay?
- 10 Make an outline of the essay which will indicate the way in which Toynbee has organized his ideas.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What value is there in ordinary individuals thinking about such vast and complicated questions as those Toynbee raises?
- 2 What do you think of the desirability of a world government?
- 3 Do you think that a unification of the world by force of arms would be good in the long run, or bad?
- 4 Do you think there is a possibility of a stable peace coming from "non violent non-cooperation" between the two parts of the world?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Great men have a real influence on events.
- 2 The idea of a "preventive war"
- 3 Religion as the cure for the world's tensions.
- 4 How "history repeats itself" in the lives of individuals

## EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER

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### *The Third Man*

"In the second century of the Christian era," writes Gibbon, "the Empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth and the most civilized part of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valor. The gentle but powerful influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. The peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury."

A couple of hundred years later, that empire had split into two and its original or western half was a wreck, a prey to anarchy and tyranny and the ultimate victim of various barbarian bands, each of which, at an earlier period, would easily have been overawed or destroyed by a few Roman legions.

What happened to Rome, history shows, is roughly what happens in all cases of great and flourishing civilizations.

Why this happens nobody quite knows. Historians speak of growth and decay. But in spite of Spengler, civilizations are not "organic" in the sense of a plant or an animal. Nonetheless, historians and philosophers regularly seek an explanation of the nemesis that has overtaken man's every civilizing adventure. Their explanations differ, yet the historical rhythm must be acknowledged.

It seems to me that whatever the ultimate explanation, each civilization is accompanied by a psychological change which symbolizes, if it does not account for, the rhythmic process. Barbarian societies are dominated by tough, warlike individuals whom I shall call Type One man. His characteristics are personal courage, a strong sense of tribalism

(the earliest patriotism), and native aggressivity. He accepts physical combat, physical injury, and death as things in the established order of nature. He kills readily—sometimes for power and plunder, sometimes in self or group defense, sometimes for pleasure—but always without reluctance or remorse.

Out of the armed struggle of Type One groups among themselves (or of such groups against a more developed society), the barbarians emerge on top and proceed in turn to develop a civilization. (Toynbee identifies more than twenty such in the course of recorded history.)

With civilization comes stability and peace. Peace permits prosperity, prosperity a measure of ease. Ease furthers the arts of peace. The will to war declines. The late Roman legions who let the barbarians through were conceivably better armed than those who conquered Gaul. Yet the individual legionary was a different sort of man. Like the civilian, the civilized soldier is no longer so ready to risk his comfort and his life for a group purpose. Finally, there comes the day when citizen and soldier alike believe that war is worse than servitude. Then they either put up a sham defense or submit—or go over to the invader. Within that society, at some point Number One man has become Number Two man, *a fellow who, for a variety of reasons, noble or ignoble, will no longer fight*.

Type One man believes (or accepts) the maxim that *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. Type Two's mother "didn't raise her boy to be a soldier." As a result, while more and better fighters are needed, fewer and worse are available.

The society has become too civilized to survive. And no matter how lofty the motives of the peace lovers, historically they represent decadence. Here is one more case of

The old rule, the ancient law,  
Since ever the world began,  
That he shall take who has the power  
And he shall keep who can

This process has occurred in all civilizations whether or not touched by the Golden Rule. Therefore we cannot assume that softer or spiritualizing ethics are basically responsible for historical decline. Yet if decline has not been hastened by the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, it is because most Christians have never taken non-resistance literally. Instead of turning the other cheek, they have fought fiercely. They have even fought in the name of their non-violent religion (the Crusades, the Thirty Years War, etc.). Princes, bishops, and parsons have led their armed cohorts out to conquest.

Moreover, it seems a safe assumption that Moslem moguls conquered

Hindu India more easily because of the advantage of a religion that glorifies bloodshed over one that advocates *ahimsa*. A tentative conclusion might well be that the decline of a non-violent civilization is somewhat faster than that of one that preserves an aggressive credo.

Up to this point, any resemblance between this description of a general pattern and contemporary society has been purely coincidental. Here we should, I think, ask whether the North Atlantic Community of 1952 is not increasingly dominated by Type Two citizens.

The West European stock from which most Americans come was warlike. Thanks to its aggressivity and technology, West Europe, with its overseas extensions, came by the end of the nineteenth century to rule or dominate most of the planet. Since that time, the rule of West Europe has steadily receded.

This recession may be due in part to the imprudent instruction of 'backward peoples' in those industrial and military techniques which give a modern society its compulsive force. If the West desired to perpetuate its rule, what greed and folly lay in bringing industrialization to peoples incapable of inventing it for themselves! The fact remains that the West has gradually lost its interest in mastery. What is more, uncounted Westerners have come to reject the "white man's burden" as something as ethically indefensible as politically and economically costly. This is one of the reasons why the West has not systematically utilized its remaining superiority in weapons of mass destruction (poison gas, A-bombs, H-bombs) successfully to crush colonial rebellion. A hundred years ago it would have done so, I think, with hardly more qualms of conscience than Communists have today.

Something has happened to Western mentality.

Let us look at the record, beginning with the peoples of Western Europe.

Danes, Swedes, and Portuguese seem too "civilized" to fight and most Italians too "individualistic" to fight very well. Neither Belgians nor Netherlanders have recently shown much stomach for war.

The French, historically a warlike people, have completely lost their aggressivity. Those who, like the writer, had close personal contact with French armies in both World Wars could not but contrast the decline of fighting spirit between these two conflicts. In the first, the French really preferred to die on their feet than live on their knees. In the second, many of the descendants of Roland, Charles Martel, Turenne, Bonaparte, and Clemenceau asked, 'Why die for Danzig?' Today their number has presumably increased.

The British spirit in World War II was, like the French in World War I, unconquerable but essentially defensive.

At present, their (untested) attitude resembles that of the French in World War II—a readiness to take the risk of foreign conquest rather than the risk of a new, more murderous conflict. Like Frenchmen (and Americans) they tend increasingly to put private ease and comfort above national security.

The Germans are still, in this respect, half primitive. Despite their great though spotty civilization, under Prussian influence they have managed to preserve a warlike spirit by the deliberate cultivation of militarism.

Where in Europe but in Germany could one have found an economist of international renown to profess (in 1933) the credo of the late Werner Sombart: "I see in the armed clash of mighty nations the highest manifestation of the Divine Will"?

Yet as a whole West Europe is pacifist. How otherwise can one judge a compact mass of over two hundred million West Europeans (including the untamed Spaniards and West Germans) who continue to quail before a smaller number of Russians rather than support the economic privations inherent in making themselves impregnable?

East Europe along with Germany still seems to produce Type One men in abundance. Perhaps because of their relative penury, Russians, Turks, Poles, Greeks, and other Balkanites have preserved the martial virtues, the essence of which is the acceptance of possible war without undue apprehension.

What about the American people?

Foreign visitors still find us unduly cocky. Though never enthusiastic soldiers, Americans have always been ready to fight. Our characteristic slogans have been "Fifty-four-forty or fight!", "Millions for defense but not a cent for tribute," etc. Yet, as a people we have chosen to hide to ourselves our over-average belligerency (attested by the number of wars we have fought during the years of our national existence) behind the assumption that we are exceptionally peace-loving.

Yet today this is no longer necessary. *We are peace-loving.* No other powerful people has ever indulged in such organized futility as our Neutrality Acts of the Thirties. Few have ever sought—as the late Senator Vandenberg told me he sought—to transform national *isolation* into *insulation*.

Yet this is such a touchy, controversial subject that I shall let other Americans build my case.

Secretary of State Cordell Hull told me back in 1940: "When I was a young man in Tennessee, young fellows were eager to defend their country. They aren't like that now!"

A letter exists from Peyton Mowrer, corporal in the Union Army, that

bears out Mr Hull In it my grandfather explains to his wife why in 1864, after three full years of military service, he could not come home to a family impoverished by his absence "until the job is done"

In 1951 I heard the statement of a cargo sergeant on a plane over Korea: "What I want is to get right back home to Kansas—and stay there I don't want to hear any more of war—not even on the radio I don't want to listen to any more foreign news I've been mixed up in this Korean mess with all them gooks and killings ever since it got started So far as I am concerned, they can take Asia and give it to Stalin It won't cost me any sleep I'm through" (The fact that after giving Asia to Stalin he would not be through but just starting had not registered)

Whittaker Chambers, in "Witness," quotes his suicide brother as saying: "We are hopeless We are gentle people We are too gentle to face the world!" And Whittaker adds, "My instinct told me that he was right." There are many Chambers families in today's America

Bert Styles, American aviator killed in World War II, wrote "We were going to knock off the Germans I knew right then that I didn't know very much about killing I didn't feel like the Polish Spitfire pilots we had met in Iceland coming over They had it bad They wanted to kill every German in the world But it was different with me I'd never been shot at or bombed My folks live on York Street in Denver, which is a long way from this war" (Next time it may not be so far)

Again, the military writer, Hanson Baldwin In World War II, he insists, American soldiers and sailors "did not have, in the bulk, the stomach for fighting or the heart for fighting, possessed by our enemies or possessed, for that matter, by the Russians"

Baldwin does not mean that there are not still among us millions of born fighters or that Americans, when intensively trained and once aroused by attack, do not fight bravely and well His point is, they do not fight as eagerly as some other peoples—or as their own ancestors The air gunner from York Street, Denver, may kill a lot of Germans It stands to reason that, other things being equal, he will not kill so many as the Pole who "wants to kill every German in the world" The major instrument of war is inflicting death on the adversary Ilya Ehrenburg's wartime exhortations to "kill Fascists" met a far greater resonance among the peoples of the USSR than General Ridgway's injunction to the UN forces in Korea to "kill Chinese" The Russians *hated* the Germans The UN fighters, by and large, do not hate the Chinese Reds

I believe that, as things stand today, most Americans *dislike* war before, during, and after taking

Now not otherwise did the contemplation of war affect the fifth century descendants of those proud Romans whose conquering tread had

shaken the earth The conclusion is unavoidable if the tag of Type One man is his ready acceptance of armed struggle, then presumably the United States, along with most of the North Atlantic community, already consists predominantly of Type Two men

Here I could rest my case

Yet if we accept this as a fact, must we not go a step farther? Must we not anticipate that at some not too distant point, the West, including the United States, will either submit without resistance to outside pressures, or yield with relatively feeble resistance to the attacks of some aggressive and hate filled society—like the USSR? Are not our present difficulties in persuading our European allies to shoulder the full burden of common defense, symptoms of the same disease that affects us—though in milder form?

How can we escape the conclusion that the West at some point will succumb to the fate that has attended all previous societies, once the civilizing process has sufficiently softened them up?

Here, as I indicated, is a problem as deadly, though less immediate, than that of destruction in a super-war If we believe in technological civilization based on freedom, we must prepare to defend that civilization not only against powerful adversaries but against history itself Where and how do we stand?

It should be plain that this is no ordinary task To call it gigantic is an understatement We have to try to save our civilization from the fate that has overtaken *all previous ones* We must accept that job with no assurance that it is possible We may prove unable to break the historical rhythm Whatever measures one suggests are bound to be resisted if not balked actively by those who cannot or will not recognize the existence of the problem

Particularly in the United States will be many who, from misplaced national pride, will deny that our country and our civilization are normally subject to the same inexorable process that has brought about the demise of all their predecessors America, they will insist, *is different* Just because Babylon and Carthage fell, they will argue, is no reason why the West should be equally mortal Who can prove that history will repeat itself?

Anyway, perhaps all peoples of the atomic age are being pushed into repudiating violence If so, we may soon find ourselves in an Eden without aggressor nations—as the late Sol Levinson, the real author of the Kellogg Briand Pact outlawing war, assumed, back in the silly Twenties

Passionate patriots will deny that contemporary Americans are more reluctant than their forefathers to fight, or to make sacrifices in defense of their country and their beliefs According to them, underneath a



vencer of softness, the "old American" is as vigorous as ever, needing only the required provocation to emerge. They will brush off the testimony of people like Cordell Hull and Hanson Baldwin as misleading or malicious. They will conclude that all would be well with America (if not with the entire West) provided only the Calamity Janes would go roll

As proof they adduce the success of the U S Marine Corps in "making men out of sissies." Therefore they prescribe extending Marine Corps training to the entire nation. Return to Spartan living, at least for youth. Put America first! "My country, right or wrong!" Make this the American Century! If only the fittest can survive, then eliminate internationalism and pacifism. Within a generation the United States will be a warrior nation. For it will again consist overwhelmingly of Type One people.

We do not know if something of the sort could succeed. Yet Sparta, Prussia, modern Japan embarked on similar courses with notable results. The United States is threatened from the outside by a powerful coalition of warlike barbarians. Why hesitate to meet them on their own ground?

Now under the present critical circumstances, any suggestion that demonstrates a recognition of the problem (whose existence so many deny) should be welcome. There are, however, objections to the Prussian solution.

In the first place, the mere proclamation of "America first" would so affect adversely our friends abroad that we should have to conquer our allies, as well as our enemies. Today, no political structure, no state can stand alone. Even as marines, 155 million Americans are too few and too weak to stand off a billion Reds.

In the second place, the deliberate reversion to Type One man (supposing that it can be done) leads today to totalitarianism—as Hitler, Germany, Imperial Japan, and Red Russia have demonstrated. In becoming a giant hedgehog, the American people would have to sacrifice the personal freedoms that make our society most worth defending. We should have transformed ourselves into the image of the thing we are opposing.

Finally, an American Sparta would be the betrayal of Christian civilization, indeed, of man's ethical development over several thousand years. Re-barbarization, revamped American imperialism, cultivated aggressivity are odious to the best Americans. An attempt to carry them out might hasten, not prevent, the downfall of Western civilization by the hostility it aroused at home. Rather than yield all gentler values, many Americans might prefer national suicide.

Another solution lies in the opposite direction. Instead of making Americans warlike, why not render the rest of the world peace-loving? Woodrow Wilson must have had something of the sort in mind when he

urged his countrymen, back in 1917, to "make the world safe for democracy" Wilson assumed then, as some anthropologists do today, that babies come into the world infinitely malleable and that their subsequent aggressivity is the result not of their nature but of institutions. So destroy autocratic institutions, Wilson argued, and the liberated peoples will just naturally live in peace.

It is a lovely vision. Arnold Toynbee argues that to escape the ruin that has overtaken all preceding civilizations Western Man must establish social justice and world government. It seems plausible. Technically, every past society has succumbed either to internal anarchy or external aggression. If you eliminate by social justice the discontent that is allegedly the cause of the first and rule out the second by effective world government, you might expect to avoid historic downfall.

Yet there is a catch here that both champions of social reform and advocates of world government seem to overlook. They have assumed that social justice would deprive people of any motive for insurrection, and enforceable law strip them of the physical possibility of successful revolt.

But would they? Substantially, Rome succumbed not to the violence of the barbarians within and without, but to the growing cynicism, self-indulgence, indifference, irresolution, pacifism, and, finally, sheer cowardice, of the Romans. Perfect social justice and a world state under law need not necessarily preclude upheaval if the citizens, for whatever reason, are no longer interested in preserving law and order or willing to take the physical risk involved in so doing. When contemporary Americans, for whatever reason, are passive, the armed thug and the daring criminal can prevail. It need not be otherwise with a country or a civilization. No institutional changes promise to eliminate the aggressive Type One people altogether. Essential savages show up in the most civilized societies. How prevent them from destroying those societies by violence? So long as one individual ready to use physical force exists, his fellows must avail themselves of counter force or submit. On this point Toynbee and the other world government advocates have had nothing to say. Any increase in essential pacifism magnifies this danger.

So we reach the unhappy conclusion: if all men belong either to Type One or to Type Two (or a mixture), with Type Two rhythmically, regularly increasing as civilization grows, then our civilization will go the way of its predecessors. In fact, the speed of our decline and fall should be greater than before. Here we reach the end of the road.

But—fortunately—if in addition to these types—the wild and the mild—another type is possible, then the blind alley opens out. When we look closely we find that this is indeed the case. *The Third Man exists*

Every civilization has contained examples. A few people are courageous yet compassionate, resolute yet gentle, highly individualized yet public spirited, at war with evil yet inwardly at peace with man. While deploring violence, they are serenely ready to meet force with superior force. They know that fighting is a lesser evil than submission or martyrdom. Therefore they can, when necessary, drop an A-bomb, regretfully but without remorse. For as champions of freedom and law, they are able to act decisively on the basis of a fifty one percent preference.

A few such individuals have headed great states—Marcus Aurelius, Saint Louis, Asoka, Skandagupta, etc.

Outstanding Western prototypes are the Chevalier Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, Sir Galahad "whose strength was as the strength of ten," and Abraham Lincoln. In the East the model was Arjuna of the Bhagavad Gita. As a ruling prince whose country was attacked, Arjuna had the duty of defending it. As a pious Hindu, he had a loyalty to non violence. How reconcile the two? The god Krishna came to his rescue. "Fight," said Krishna, "but without hatred or personal responsibility." So Arjuna fought.

The Third Man exists. The task is to multiply him to the point where his views color our society. Can it be done? Nobody can say in advance. But if it is—as some countries seem to have shown—possible to "re-brutalize" a society by special militarization, then it ought by a different treatment be possible to increase the number of citizens of a better sort.

The modern West, whatever its failings, has unquestionably gone farther toward "social justice" than previous societies. It has recently caught a vision of peace through world government under law. These should make the field favorable for planting.

Another presumably favorable factor is our knowledge of the history of our predecessors, with its regular demonstration of growth and decay. Surely, a society warned in advance of what happens if it does nothing has a better chance of deflecting the normal fate.

Should we make up our minds to try and change the pattern of past history, modern pedagogy seems to be able to influence the pupils' outlook and attitudes. And just because the Russians, like the Germans, use indoctrination to produce psychological cripples and moral monsters is no reason why we should not utilize modern techniques under strict control, to produce demonstrably better people.

Such education would have to be more positive than at present, particularly at the lower levels. It would value liberty above personal security, courage above caution, duty above rights. It would, within limits, consciously stimulate adventure and the rewarding of risk. Above all, it would aim at keeping the West conscious of the unique quality of its

values, and stimulate the will to keep them. It would, at least, place less emphasis on comparing our civilization with utopia (to our detriment) and rather contrast it with other real societies (to our advantage).

Here the skeptic may remark with some acidity that despite nearly two thousand years of Christian education, even that part of humanity most exposed to it has remained singularly un-Christian. Conceivably the Third Man is an accident.

I would concede that if, to save itself, the West had to produce a host of Galahads and Lincolns, its situation would be hopeless. Such people happen along only once in a blue moon. We need not aim so high. We already possess in our midst certain representative groups who, without achieving the Arjuna level, possess some of the needed qualities.

The police who finally cornered and disposed of John Dillinger at the risk of their lives manifested the essential devotion to law and order.

Our best professional officers—Army, Air, Navy, and Marine—habitually manifest an indomitable devotion to patriotic duty. 'Ike' Eisenhower manages both to command our greatest armies and to hate war as much as any pacifist.

Yet the good cop and the fine officer, despite their courage and detachment, cannot become the models of a society that aims at the substitution of law for violence and the individual conscience for group emotion.

The prototype of the Third Man must be not only a citizen selflessly devoted to duty but a visionary planning a better future. We can find him most easily, I think, in the great epidemiologist.

Back in China in 1938, I watched such a man fight cholera. He went about destroying the bacteria systematically, relentlessly, without fuss and feathers and with no regard for personal danger. He did not hate bacilli. He simply destroyed them in the name of a higher life.

His, I think, was the spirit that the West most needs. He is the sort of American who could recruit preponderant international power for peace without danger of relapsing into tyranny or imperialism, and who, having done so, would then work realistically for a world without war.

And now a final word. To many, all this is bound to appear as alarmist nonsense. They will point to young Americans in Korea who, after a period of uncertainty, have settled down to the grim business of killing with the spirit and efficiency of their forefathers. Yet let those who think that the West has lost nothing of its essential manliness explain why the country—ours—that possesses almost half of the world's industrial potential is *unwilling to make the financial sacrifices necessary to have the world's best air force?* Here is a basic fact of our time—nobody's alarmist theory!

To others it may seem fantastic to be worrying about our civilization's

ultimate downfall at a time when avoiding a new world war seems the most urgent task. But it is fantastic only to those who still believe that the present aggressors can be mollified by "fair treatment" or bought off by concessions.

Non-violence is the quickest road to ruin. Reversing the unmistakable trend toward unilateral pacifism (and cynicism, its inevitable complement) is not only essential if we are to avoid armed catastrophe, but if, after escaping conquest, the West is to avert historic downfall. Today only the West has freedom, and if we go, freedom will go with us. If we put the preservation of freedom above peace—most of us still do—then we shall stop "disarming the minds of our youth" and strive rather to steel them in a new and finer way—in the name of whatever gods we worship. We shall consciously develop the Third Man.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Explain what Mowrer means by "Type One Man" and by "Type Two Man."
- 2 What has happened to the mental attitudes of men in the West, according to Mowrer?
- 3 What changes does he say have occurred in the mental attitude of Americans?
- 4 Why does Mowrer oppose "deliberate reversion to Type One Man"?
- 5 What does he believe are the flaws in the policy of trying to make the rest of the world peace loving?
- 6 Explain what he means by "The Third Man."
- 7 Analyze the way in which Mowrer organizes his essay around the three types of men. Why does he discuss Types One and Two rather thoroughly before he turns to Type Three?
- 8 How effectively does Mowrer use examples to make his meaning clear? Why does he use more examples in discussing Type Three than in discussing the other types?
- 9 Indicate the principal transitional devices used by Mowrer. Are they effective in recalling what has been said and pointing to what is to come?
- 10 For what purpose has the author used questions? Is this device successful in this essay?
- 11 Comment critically on Mowrer's introduction to his subject. Is it interesting? Could it be improved?
- 12 Do the last three paragraphs make a successful conclusion to this essay? Why or why not?

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Are the characteristics of "The Third Man" such that most people can imitate them with some success?
2. Do we really have a preponderance of Type Two men?

- 3 Do you think there is danger that the United States is not willing to be warlike enough? Too warlike?
- 4 Can highly technological warfare be conducted well by men who aren't especially warlike?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Christianity and war
- 2 We can (or cannot) produce Type Three men by education
- 3 The best policy war, non violence or an in between attitude?
- 4 What happens to supermen and why

### DEXTER PERKINS

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## *The American Attitude Toward War*

Over the age in which we live there hangs the shadow of a war of destruction—a war more far reaching and disastrous in its consequences than any that has been fought on this planet. It does not lie within the province of the historian to say whether at some foreseeable time such a war will break out. But it does lie within his province objectively to appraise the contemporary situation in the light of the past, and to try to determine through an examination of the circumstances in which the United States has hitherto gone to war, and through an analysis of the national attitudes and beliefs, what are the circumstances in which it might be drawn into war in the future.

In an international struggle the people of the United States have, in the past, six times taken up arms: first, in 1798, when they waged an informal war on the sea with France, second, in 1812, when they locked horns with Great Britain, third, when they carried hostilities against Mexico, fourth, when they liberated Cuba—and, incidentally, acquired the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico, and, fifth and sixth, when they became involved in the great world conflicts of our time. What is to be learned from an examination of this record? What does it suggest with regard to the future?

In the first place, it is clear that the Americans have not needed to be

invaded to be provoked into war. It is true that the sneak attack of the Japanese on Pearl Harbor precipitated the actual taking up of arms in 1941, but it is also clear that this country was on the verge of a clash with Germany and Japan when that event occurred. With the Reich we were at that moment engaged in a quasi-war on the seas, with Japan we had already broken off commercial relations, and were giving positive aid to a Chinese government which was resisting Japanese aggression. There may be some naïve persons who, in judging the conflict with Mexico, still put faith in President Polk's remarkable statement, in justification of hostilities, that American blood had been shed upon American soil, but our diplomatic historians have time and again pointed out, first, that it is doubtful whether the territory on which the first clash of arms occurred was really American, and, second, and more important, that Polk had made up his mind for war before the clash occurred. Broadly speaking, then, we must rule out the hypothesis that only actual aggression on our home land can lead to war.

There is also another conclusion which can be briefly stated. It does not seem probable that our entrance into an international conflict will be caused solely by an "incident." The record of the years indicates that while a single dramatic event may, of course, intensify popular passion, there is always a train of circumstances behind the actual taking up of arms. In 1798, for example, the American people were no doubt affronted by the rough treatment accorded their representatives in Paris, when the French government attempted to extort from the delegates of the United States a forced loan and a bribe as the price of the cessation of French aggression upon American commerce at sea, but this aggression had already been going on under trying conditions for some time, and had produced in this country an irritation to which the rebuff of the so-called XYZ mission only added. Again, the most famous episode in Anglo-American relations in the troubled period of the second Jefferson and the two Madison Administrations was, beyond question, the assault of the British frigate *Leopard* on the American war vessel *Chesapeake*, but it was not until five years after this event that the United States took up arms. The war with Mexico, as has been said, was not produced by the Mexican crossing of the Rio Grande and the skirmish of Mexican forces with those of General Taylor. It is perhaps more difficult to rule out of account in such dogmatic fashion the sinking of the *Maine* in Havana harbor, in 1898, as a factor of the first importance in our engaging in hostilities with Spain. But for some time before this happened the American people were being lashed into a mood of profound indignation with Spanish misgovernment and brutality in Cuba, and into an equally profound sympathy with the struggle of the Cubans for independence. Com-

ing down to the two world wars, it is significant that the sinking of the *Lusitania*, while it provided the issue which led to the eventual entry of the United States into the struggle against Germany, preceded by nearly two years (May 7, 1915—April 6, 1917) the actual declaration of hostilities, and that the sinking of the *Athenia*, at the beginning of the period 1939-1945, produced hardly more than a ripple on the surface of American opinion. It is dangerous, of course, to speak with dogmatism in the complex field of human affairs, but it seems correct to say on the basis of our history that while a dramatic incident may heighten the popular indignation that leads towards war, there must be for Americans a longer train of causes actually to produce an armed conflict. In one mood, an incident will have little or no effect, in another it may add fuel to an already rising flame, but it can never be regarded in and of itself as the explanation of an American resort to arms.

There is another generalization closely connected with this. As a rule, the American people have been rather slow to anger. The outrageous treatment of American commerce by the French which led to the explosion of 1798 began at least as early as the winter of 1796, the indignities to which American trade and the American person were subjected by Great Britain long preceded 1812, the Cuban conflict and insurrection which finally led to intervention in 1898 had begun in 1895, the aggressions of Germany to which America raised objection were, as we have just seen, of long standing in 1917, and the menace raised by Hitlerian and Japanese ambition was well recognized several years before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Even in the case of the struggle with Mexico, President Polk made what must, by the candid historian, be regarded as a *bona fide* effort to reach a settlement with the government at Mexico City before resorting to war. It is in a gathering irritation rather than in some sudden outburst of feeling that the basis of American action is to be found.

To say this is, of course, only to say that the action of the United States in international affairs is deeply influenced by its democratic forms. No prudent statesman in a democracy will force the issue until public opinion has been pretty clearly crystallized, he must and should wait upon its gathering force. And since it is the essence of the democratic principle that dissent can and should express itself, the integration of the people's will is bound to be a longer and more complex process than it is in a totalitarian state. We can, with caution, even go a little further, and say that it is probable that the first occasion of direct challenge is not likely to cause an actual outbreak of conflict, and that for better or worse, a democratic nation will always have a little of the water of appeasement in its blood.



A war for the United States, then, is not likely either to wait upon the actual physical invasion of American territory, or to result from a mere incident instigated by a hostile power. Is it likely, on the other hand, to be the product of American imperialism, of an impulse to conquer and dominate others?

In the sense in which it was true of Hitlerian Germany, I do not think it can be said that the United States is revealed by history to be an imperialistic nation, or, at any rate, that it is now imperialistic in this sense. Yet, even though the national mood today bears out such a generalization, as I shall attempt to show, there is more in the American past than meets the average American eye, and this may suggest that the people of the United States are not entirely free from the age-old passion to enlarge the national domain by force. Let us analyze the record in this regard.

There is, first of all, our series of wars with the Indians. To these most of us, even if we think we know quite a bit about American history, remain blandly indifferent. Yet the number of these struggles is considerable, and it is to them, in substantial degree, that we owe the gradual clearing of the continent. To say nothing of the colonial wars, there was Mad Anthony Wayne's victory over the redskins of the Northwest, there was Andrew Jackson's defeat of the southern Indians in the battle of Horseshoe Bend, there was the Black Hawk War, in which Abraham Lincoln played an inconspicuous part, there were the many campaigns against the Indians of the plains, and the dramatic conflict that ended with the massacre of General Custer and his men. All this may not count as aggression to the American mind, the Indian wars, indeed, are hardly remembered by many of our citizens, and are part of the family tradition of very few, compared with most conflicts involving movements of expansion, they caused relatively little loss of life, and even moralistic Americans would not wish to undo their results, or even to spend much time in regretting them. None the less, the fact that America's expansive energies involved only the dispossession of a relatively small number of persons of another race is due to chance rather than to virtue.

The record by no means stops here. On occasion, Americans have been spared the necessity of physical conquest by the easier process of expansion into other people's territory—and then revolution. It was by this indirect technique, for example, that we secured the region known as West Florida in 1810, American settlers moved over into the domains of Spain, and at a convenient moment staged a revolt, and set up an independent state. Before this state was fairly established, President Madison occupied the region, and thus, without much trouble, what might have been attained by conquest, became an innocent move to extend protection to our own kin, who had freed themselves from Spanish

tyranny The same technique, more cautiously and decently applied, brought us Texas Again American settlement was followed by revolution, and the revolutionists set up a government, and in due course this new State was incorporated in the Union If we had not acquired California by other means the chances are that a similar expedient might have brought us that rich and fertile region

Twice, moreover, we have acquired territory by direct conquest. Historians differ as to the degree of culpability that attaches to President Polk for the waging of the Mexican War, it is generally recognized today that the Mexicans were themselves spoiling for a fight, and that Polk made an honest effort to come to a peaceable understanding with them, but it is also pretty generally agreed that with more forbearance on his part, war might have been avoided And when it came, the promptitude with which California was occupied is only one of many evidences of the cupidity that lay behind the war itself

In 1898 the United States took up arms against Spain It was a war of liberation, of course, intended to free the Cubans from the tyrant's yoke Yet the first important battle of the war was fought in Manila Bay, and led to the acquisition of the Philippines, and somehow or other when the brief conflict was ended, we found ourselves in possession of Puerto Rico and Guam as well, and had managed to annex Hawaii and establish ourselves in Samoa

Nor was this the end of the story For in the decades following the war of 1898, we acquired a distinct interest in the regulation of the little states of the Caribbean We established a virtual protectorate over Panama in 1903 We intervened in Nicaragua in 1912, in Haiti in 1915, in the Dominican Republic in 1916 And, although these interventions were temporary, they were roundly denounced at the time in many of the countries of Latin America as nothing more nor less than 'imperialism' It is possible, therefore, for cynical foreigners to see the history of the United States as by no means free from the acquisitive impulses, and to suggest that possibly the same impulses that were here expressed will, in due course, occur again Is it so certain, they ask, that the United States will never again engage in a war of conquest or attempt to extend its physical control over other lands?

Of course, no historian is going to give a categorical answer to this question Yet the history of the United States does distinctly suggest that the imperialistic impulse, which occurs in the development of every great nation, has run with our own a different course from what is assumed by our foreign critics It has been strangely mingled with a respect for the democratic process that, in and of itself, makes conquest a little absurd It is, indeed, the case that a good many of the acquisitions

of the United States have come about only after substantial political opposition, and that always the strong respect of the American people for the principle of self government had made itself felt in connection with the final decision. There was opposition to the annexation of Texas, there was strong opposition to the Mexican War, in the latter case President Polk himself drew back from the proposals of the more ardent expansionists for the annexation of all of Mexico, or even of northern Mexico itself. True, these earlier movements of opposition were connected with the slavery question, but a half a century later, no such domestic issue entered into the equation when it came to the peace treaty with Spain. The opponents of the acquisition of the Philippines (and they were in not a few instances influential members of the party in power) were actuated by a strong dislike for the whole principle of imperialism, they believed that the words of the Declaration of Independence meant what they said, they went back to the fundamental principle that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. They did not at first prevail, but they won a good deal of their contention in the long run. For the American policy became the policy of rapid preparation of the Philippines, and of Puerto Rico as well, for self government, and today the United States has conceded complete independence to the first of these territories, and wide self rule to the other.

Still more striking has been the reaction to the interventions in the Caribbean. A case could be made out for the political control by some strong government of such unruly little states as Haiti or the Dominican Republic, or Nicaragua in the second decade of the century. But American reaction against the occupation of these republics began with the end of the First World War. No one of these episodes lasted as much as two decades. The longest, that of Haiti, was only eighteen years. And the shortest, that of the Dominican Republic, was only about eight.

In this same period of the interventions, there was offered to the United States such a temptation as has rarely been put before a great power. Mexico with its great potential resources was a prey to violent internal disorders in the years after 1910. There were powerful American interests there ready to stop at no expedient to bring about aggressive American action. Yet no such action ever took place. With a forbearance that is almost unparalleled, the government at Washington withheld its hand, and even when the Mexican revolution had triumphed, and at times challenged our own conception of property rights, the thought of physical coercion was put aside.

Moreover, in the last decade and a half, we have gone further than any great state has ever gone to tie our hands in our relations with our

neighbors By the conventions of Montevideo and Buenos Aires we have estopped ourselves from interference in the domestic affairs of these states And by a complicated series of arbitration treaties and conciliation treaties we have provided for the peaceful settlement of all disputes More than this, we have in the convention of Chapultepec agreed to be bound by a two-thirds vote in defining an aggressor, as relates to the action of New World states against one another, and in this way again we have put a brake—an unprecedented brake—on our own unilateral action Finally, it is to be observed that the most important of these engagements have been ratified by the unanimous action of the Senate—a rarity, as may well be imagined, in our international relations This forswearing of imperialistic action in the New World may, therefore, be taken as reflecting a virtual consensus in the United States

The strong desire of Americans to respect the democratic principle is now evident in our treatment of conquered Germany and Japan The general set of our policy with regard to these countries is not to exploit them, or to maintain control over them, it is to prepare them for self-government In Japan we have already set up representative institutions, and conceded considerable freedom to the native regime, in Germany our policy looks to a greater and greater degree of public participation by Germans, and to eventual self rule There is, nowhere, a demand to treat these countries as conquered provinces, we are spending money on them, not taking it out of them, and the general popular assumption is that the day will come when we shall withdraw, leaving them to their own devices

All in all, then, the pattern of American political thinking and of American political action for the last fifty years does not suggest that the United States will embark upon any program which can be interpreted abroad as a program of conquest True, the physical power of this country is apparent today in areas where it was much less conspicuous before, many of the island strongholds of the Pacific are in our hands, our fleet ranges the Mediterranean, our garrisons extend from Tokyo on the east to Berlin on the west But the impulse to dominate by force of arms does not seem apparent.

Marxists, of course, will have their own opinion on all this They can think of us in no terms but those of capitalist imperialism the United States must, in the nature of the case, move towards the control of larger and larger markets, must extend its dominion further and further But there is little in the history of the last fifty years to support the thesis of American capitalist imperialism, the physical area under the control of the American government (excepting occupied Germany and occupied Japan, in which we share with others the task of administration) is

actually less today than it was fifty years ago. Contrary to Marxist assumption, it may well be that the expansion required by the nature of a capitalist society will take place in large degree vertically rather than horizontally, that is, by further technological advance in the United States rather than by an immense development outside its borders, and it is not clear that horizontal expansion, if it takes place, will raise any demand for new areas under the military control of the American government.

There are, however, countervailing considerations. Cynical domination of others does not seem to accord with the American character today. But the situation that now exists in Greece suggests a warning. Our presence there is, in my judgment, wholly defensible. The present government of Greece was chosen in a free election, in assisting it to stay in power by economic aid, yes, by military assistance as well, we are supporting the democratic principle, and leaving to the Greeks a freer choice over their own destinies than they would otherwise have. But it is a tricky business thus to assist others, and it can easily lead, in the name of democracy, to the perpetuation of régimes that have, in reality, lost their popular mandate and could be replaced in free elections. Furthermore, the implications of such action are extremely far reaching. Suppose, for example, that in due course Germany is evacuated by the victor states, and that a democratic regime is established there. Suppose that this regime is overthrown by one of a totalitarian cast. Might not the democratic principle itself then lead to intervention, and on towards an international war? The American people wish others to govern themselves, and they have frequently so demonstrated, but they wish others to govern themselves in a democratic way. Is not such an attitude one that can easily be the foundation for a democratic crusade that bears some family resemblance to imperialism?

Moreover, it is undeniable that there is a kind of rhythm in the history of American expansion. Sentiment for the acquisition of new territory certainly existed in 1798 when the Federalists had their eyes on the colonial territory of Spain, and, as Professor Pratt has sought to show in his 'Expansionists of the War of 1812,' at the time of our second war with Britain, it cropped up in a much more virulent form in the 1840's and 1850's, leading, not only to the war with Mexico, but also to such unofficial imperialism as William Walker's famous filibustering expedition into Nicaragua, and to constant Southern demands for the annexation of Cuba, and after a long period of quietude it was again apparent in the Nineties, in the movement for the acquisition of Hawaii, and in the agitation that preceded the war with Spain. Whether it is mere chance that all these upswings of a somewhat bumptious ambition fol-

lowed a short time after a long period of depression, is a question that cannot be answered here, but it is at least possible that there is some connection between these two sets of phenomena, and it is impossible to rule out the thesis that at some time in the future, under the influence of economic difficulties at home, or in the more buoyant mood of recovery from these difficulties (as in 1845 and 1898), we might be tempted towards an aggressive policy abroad. At least, it may be said that one precaution against the development of jingoism in this country is to keep our economic house in some kind of good order.

Yet the wars of the United States, in general, have not been wars produced by the imperialist impulse in its naked form. Of the six international conflicts in which we have been engaged, four have been intimately connected with events in Europe and have, to a large extent at any rate, been brought about by hostilities which originated on the other side of the Atlantic. In the first two of these wars, one important factor was indignation at the violation of American neutral rights combined with resentment at the affronts to the dignity of the nation. This was, of course, particularly true of the informal war with France in 1798. The government of the Directory had acted ruthlessly against American shipping in the course of the general European war then raging. To make matters worse, it had first refused to receive an American envoy and then attempted to extort from the American negotiators who had been sent to Paris concessions in the way of a bribe and of a loan which they could not grant. The publication of their dispatches in Philadelphia produced a violent burst of indignation in the United States, and brought about war with France at sea. The War of 1812 has, as has already been stated, sometimes been assigned an imperialist origin. But resentment at the gross disregard of the rights of American seamen and at interruptions to American trade, were the declared motive of the conflict, and there would be few historians today who would entirely rule out this element in the situation. In 1917—despite the attempts of some students of diplomatic history to trace our entrance into the First World War to financial and commercial reasons—it is not to be denied that the actual *casus belli* was the German submarine warfare.

Wars for the defense of neutral rights are, from one point of view, an absurdity. It is not possible for a nation to secure respect for such rights by shifting from the position of a neutral to that of a belligerent. But the fact that three times the American people have, in a measure at any rate, been goaded into war by assault upon what they chose to regard as their dignity suggests that not merely national interest, coolly considered, but a profound emotional factor has often influenced their decision. Nations differently situated, especially small nations, have sometimes

chosen in the midst of European convulsion a very different course. The Swedes, in particular, have more than once ridden out the storm without becoming actively involved, at the cost of a certain amount of national pride.

The chance of our participating in a new conflict as a result of a violation of neutral rights seems, however, remote today, for the balance of power in Europe has changed, and only one power of the first rank is left upon that continent. For this reason, the possibility of a new Armageddon depends less upon the outbreak of a purely European struggle than upon conflicts in the new set of forces that are now becoming apparent. The question is, therefore, to be raised whether other motives, besides wounded dignity, have played a part in our involvements in Europe, and whether these motives are still in existence today. The answer to this question must emphatically be given in the affirmative.

Those historians who think only in terms of some concrete national interest which is material in character miss a large part of the picture in their analysis of foreign policy. Ideas are a powerful directive of action. They are, perhaps, particularly powerful in a democratic state, where the mass of the voters find it easier to be guided by general principles than by any careful analysis of complex data. In every one of the European wars that have touched the United States, the influence of ideology is apparent, and perhaps it may be said to have reached its climax in the struggle just ended. To start at the beginning, the strong Federalist aversion to the excesses of the French Revolution was a factor in sharpening the antagonism which led to conflict in 1798. The hereditary dislike of Britain was a factor in 1812. Looking at the matter objectively from the standpoint of affronts to American pride, there was as much reason in that year for this country to go to war with France as with England.

The psychological set of the American mind undeniably made war with Germany easier in 1917. From the beginning of that European struggle many of the most influential elements in American opinion were convinced that the war was a war of aggression on the part of the Reich, they were horrified by the invasion of Belgium, they were affronted by the strongly militarist bias of the German government, exaggeratedly described as autocracy. All these facts taken together undoubtedly helped to bring about the acceptance by the United States of the resort to arms. This phase of the matter may be usefully restated in slightly different terms. In 1914, in particular, there was evident from the beginning of the struggle a tendency to moralize the issues and to conceive of the European war as a conflict between good and evil. This tendency was still clearer in 1939 and 1940. The great mass of the American people detested or at least disliked the Hitlerian tyranny. They were shocked at

Japan's cynical career of conquest in the Orient. And, ever since the battle over the League of Nations in 1920, there had been growing up in the United States a profound conviction that aggressive war was immoral. This conviction had been reflected in the Kellogg Pact of 1928, with its attempt to outlaw war, it was clearly evident in the popular reaction to the events that preceded the war of 1941. It was expressed as early as 1937 in the famous Roosevelt speech at Chicago proposing international 'quarantine' of aggressors. Although, it is true, at that time there was still a strongly pacific spirit mixed with the moral condemnation of aggression, and although the President's utterance itself fell flat, it is also true that as time went on the popular feeling against Germany and Japan became deeper, and developed into a real antagonism in 1940 and 1941. The increasing sensitiveness of Americans to external aggression far beyond their borders is, indeed, evidenced by the contrast between 1914 and 1939.

In the First World War the American government began with neutrality and made an earnest effort to maintain that neutrality, it sought a settlement of the submarine issue, even after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and, whatever President Wilson may have thought in private of the moral issues involved, his public speeches stressed the maintenance of American rights and not the moral conflict involved in the views of the two sets of belligerents, down to the actual entrance of the United States into the struggle. It was, besides, more than two and a half years before neutrality, at least in theory, was abandoned. Far different was the course of events in 1939. There was, from the beginning, no pretense on the part of the President or his advisers of moral neutrality, with the fall of France, after less than ten months of war, the Administration pledged itself to assist the democratic nations, the two great political parties were both committed to such a policy in the presidential campaign of 1940, and the enactment of Lend lease in the late winter of 1941 was in effect a taking of sides in the struggle. During the same period, the extension of aid to China made it perfectly clear that the American government was not truly neutral in the war then being waged by Japan in China.

There can be no question that this sense of a profound ideological conflict, with the notion of evil genius largely transferred in our minds from Germany and Japan to Russia, has survived the war. It must be strong just in proportion as the faith in the democratic principle is strong. Were it to be assumed as it well might be that democratic government is the product of various concrete phenomena—of that vague thing described as national temperament, of the wide distribution of property, of a prosperity sufficiently constant to subject the nation to minor rather than major strains—the ideological conflict with Russia would by that



very fact be in some degree attenuated. But the constant harping upon a world conflict between democracy and Communism is obviously an explosive force of very large dimensions.

There is another factor in the situation today that needs to be taken into account. The moral antagonism that existed between militarist Germany or Japan and the United States, the moral antagonism that exists between Russia and this country today, is much intensified by the role of the contemporary press and radio, and by the demand of these agencies, especially the press, for the maximum publicity in international negotiation. American journalism is based on the assumption that the public ought to know as much as possible. In time of war, where the national interest demanded, an honorable secrecy was indeed practised, but in time of peace there are not likely to be many restraints on the publication of any fact—or rumor—that is interesting and exciting, even though such publication may, from an objective standpoint, have undeniably serious consequences. Conflict is in its essence newsworthy, agreement is far less newsworthy. It is the business of the newspaper man to report, of course, but what he is apt to report or overemphasize is disagreement. No doubt a democratic people get used to discounting the rumors of war that constantly assail their ears and eyes, but only a fanatical defender of the contemporary press would be likely to maintain that such news stories act as an emollient in international relations.

Much the same thing is to be said with regard to open diplomacy. That the public should be informed of the broad lines of policy in a democracy is, of course, true, but that newspaper men should arrogate to themselves the right to be kept in touch with the details of negotiation is another matter. Negotiation involves compromise, and compromise is difficult if the two disputants find every concession that they make held up to view, to become the subject of controversy and perhaps condemnation, in the public prints. The total result of a given negotiation may be well worth while to both negotiators, and the broad judgment may be in favor of its acceptance, but, if every point yielded or won is to be blown up into a great issue, the wisdom of the whole may be obscured when it is finally disclosed.

Added to moral preoccupations, there are other elements which now have to be taken into the account in assessing the evolution of American opinion. The notions of security held by Americans today have developed into something very different from those of a hundred and twenty-five years ago. In the wars of 1798 and 1812, though the physical invasion of the United States, in one case, was set up as a bogey by rabid Federalists, and, in the other, actually came to pass, we hear nothing of the argument that the integrity of the country was itself in danger. In 1917 there

was certainly in the background of American thought the idea that for the Germans to secure control of the Atlantic would imperil the position of the United States. But not until the world war of 1939 did the idea that the American people were in actual danger of attack play an important part. It was stressed again and again by President Roosevelt, and indeed by many others. And, with the growth of air power, and the portentous reach of Hitlerian and Japanese ambition, who can say that this judgment was wrong? What constitutes security at a given moment is a metaphysical as well as a physical matter, but it is certainly reasonable to assume today that the occupation of western Europe by a totalitarian power, or the control of Germany by such a power, would constitute a direct menace to the safety of the United States. The range of American action has inevitably widened, sensitiveness to aggression has inevitably increased. Nor is it to be forgotten that President Truman placed our present action in Greece in part on grounds of security, and that it now seems logical and rational for an American fleet to patrol the Mediterranean. Putting the matter in another way, there are more trouble-points out of which a war might come than there have ever been for us before.

Nor must we forget that besides national security there is the notion of collective security. This idea is a twentieth-century creation, the product of the First World War. Its potency is difficult to measure. It was behind the Wilsonian conception of the League. It was, possibly in a somewhat naïve form, in the background of the famous effort of the Kellogg Pact to outlaw war. It was present in the policy of the Hoover Administration towards the Japanese occupation of Manchuria. It was implicit in some of the speeches of President Roosevelt. And it has a place in the Charter of the United Nations. Whether the American people are ready to appeal to force whenever aggression raises its head, and to act to the limit of their national power to repress such aggression, is by no means certain. The threat of punitive action might prove to be effective in preventing acts of violence by others, but it is also possible that the adherence to collective security might lead to war for the defense of a cherished principle, however remote the direct national interest involved. This is not to say that the notion is wrong. It is merely to say that in its practical working it might conceivably lead to a wider conflict than would otherwise take place.

This review of the national mood and of the national habits with regard to war offers others as well as ourselves definite clues as to our behavior in future periods of international strain or provocation that could end in armed conflict. It is important for all of us, if we are, as we must be, concerned with the present tension between the United States and the Soviet

Union, to consider carefully what light these clues may throw on the future policy of our country

Of course, we cannot with scientific accuracy deduce the future from the past, the problems are too complicated, and new and imponderable elements frequently enter into the equation. But certainly nothing that our survey reveals affords us the slightest reason for complacency or in consequent optimism. On the other hand, it is important to inquire whether there are elements in the existing situation that entitle us to look upon the international scene with a qualified cheerfulness. I believe that there are such.

In the first place, the large scale international wars in which the United States has engaged have been in part due to the fact that the enemies of America have counted upon the incapacity of the United States effectively to mobilize its people and resources. Both in 1917 and in 1940-41 the German government egregiously miscalculated in this regard. It drew, and perhaps was entitled to draw, some support for this miscalculation from the state of American opinion, from the strong peace sentiment manifested in the election of 1916, for example, and from the close vote by which the draft law was extended in 1941. While today some Americans still hold to the romantic notion that weakness and unpreparedness make negotiation easy, the existence of a peace time draft is impressive evidence of a new evolution in American opinion. It is coming more and more to be recognized that power may act as a deterrent to aggression, and that very great power may act as a very great deterrent. The United States possesses that power today not only in the atomic bomb but in its advanced technology, and what American ingenuity may hereafter devise for a future struggle is so terrible to think of as to make a direct physical challenge to this nation less likely, perhaps, than ever before. This is, indeed, a grim way to look at the matter, but it is a better ground for hope than the belief that international antagonisms can be exorcised by vague appeals to good will.

Perhaps, as others have suggested, the very magnitude of the disaster of modern war will mean that the competition of ideologies will be fought by other methods than those of all-out military conflict. There are certainly clear evidences that Russian policy today seeks to attain its ends by *intrigue*, by *infiltration*, by the promotion of economic disorder, by a kind of psychological attrition, rather than by direct military action, and just because, as was so brilliantly pointed out in *Foreign Affairs* by Mr. A., the men in the Kremlin believe in the inevitable triumph of their side in the long run, they may be content for some time to rely upon these weapons. In the degree that this is so, the answer for us to such expedients lies in the preservation of our own economic health, in the extension of

assistance to western Europe, in the attainment of economic reconstruction and economic advance, and in constant vigilance on the part of our military establishment and State Department. Complex as the problem is, the immense technological resources of the modern age give us reason to hope that the second half of the twentieth century may see such improvements in the standards of living in substantial areas as will make it possible for us to meet the challenge that comes from Moscow

Furthermore, just as there has been a rhythm in our own foreign policy, so there may be a rhythm in that of the Soviet Union. Today the Kremlin appears extremely militant, but there must be at least a question whether in due course it will not be influenced by the immense need of quiet at home, by the pressure of the Russian masses for some improvement of their living standards, by the pursuit of that ideal of the good society which is by no means absent from the Communist ideology

Finally, it is conceivable that some kind of *modus vivendi* can be worked out between the two rival systems, either directly or through the agency of the United Nations. There may be a policy of limited objectives in the field of international politics, as there often is in life in general. It is true that both the Russian and American systems are dynamic, and that any definite division of the world into rival spheres of influence is not only very difficult to arrive at in the first place (and sure to be denounced on both sides as appeasement), but that, even if it could be attained, there is no guarantee that it would stay put. Yet it is also true that neither the United States nor the U.S.S.R. is strong enough to give the law to the whole world, and that practical considerations of statesmanship may lead in time to some rough balance of interests, or better still to the development of some policy of common abstention from interference in the affairs of other states

None of these things can be counted on in present circumstances, but each of them suggests the lines on which American foreign policy may move so long as armed clashes can be avoided. We must be strong, we must seek to preserve our economic health and assist world recovery, we must define our objectives in terms of reality rather than in terms so extended that our power for good is diffused, and wasted. And if we do all these things, while we must, indeed, face the future with a clear view of its possible perils, we need not quail before it.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. Describe the circumstances under which the United States has gone to war in the past.
2. What effect does the democratic structure of our society have upon its readiness to go to war?

- 3 According to Perkins, what might induce us to go to war in the future?
- 4 What factors does Perkins find in the moral attitude and temperament of the United States which are likely to lead to war?
- 5 What factors does he find that may lead away from war rather than toward it?
- 6 What is Perkins attempting to accomplish in his first two paragraphs?
- 7 Does listing the wars engaged in by the United States add to the effectiveness of the presentation? If so, how?
- 8 Divide the subject matter of this essay into its principal parts. How are they indicated?
- 9 To what type of audience is this essay addressed? Upon what evidence do you base your answer?
- 10 Point out a number of instances in which the author reminds the reader of the subject of the essay

### FOR DISCUSSION

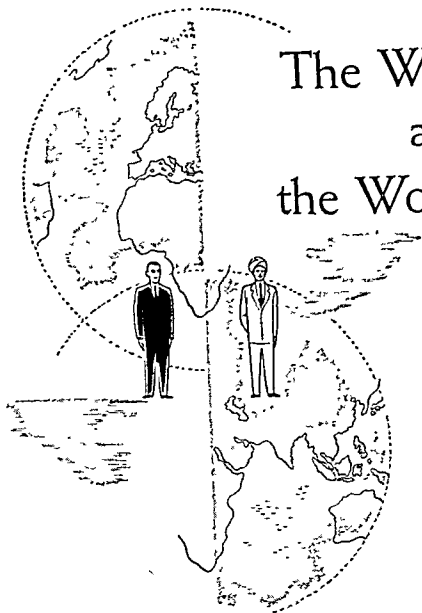
- 1 What is the use of discussing events that happened as long as 150 years ago in trying to ascertain the conditions under which the United States might go to war?
- 2 Did the Korean war, which started after Perkins wrote his article fulfill some of the conditions he mentioned—and did he therefore in a sense foretell it?
- 3 Can the United States logically ask that all other countries govern themselves democratically?
- 4 What in your opinion is the greatest single cause of wars?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 We should (should not) intervene in wars in other countries.
- 2 The best policy for avoiding war
- 3 Armaments as a deterrent to aggressors
- 4 The responsibility of newspapers in handling international news.

## *Chapter Eleven*

# The West and the World



**THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS  
INTO PLOWSHARES, AND THEIR SPEARS  
INTO PRUNING-HOOKS; NATION  
SHALL NOT LIFT UP SWORD AGAINST NATION,  
NEITHER SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE**

**ISAIAH**

## Introduction

Today many countries of the world look at the West either with hostility or with varying degrees of skepticism. The West is fortunate in its material well being, and is an object of envy as well as an example to be emulated. Parts of the West have had a bad record of colonialism, and are objects of hostility to some subject and formerly subject peoples. The West is predominantly white in race, the rest of the world is predominantly colored.

There can be no doubt that cleavages exist, and that their nature and extent are of significant importance today. To introduce you to some of the problems facing the West in its relations with other parts of the world and to indicate briefly their nature is the purpose of this section.

Since the issue of war or peace may well be decided by our ability to bring the West and the rest of the world into some kind of harmonious relations, it is appropriate that this section open with "War and Peace" by Charles Malik, Minister from Lebanon to the United States and his country's representative at the United Nations. Mr. Malik is in an excellent position to see the problems in perspective. The selection in this section is part of a statement he made before the Political Committee of the General Assembly on November 23, 1949. In it he analyzes the philosophy of Communism and indicates what he thinks are its basic errors. Then he turns to the West and analyzes the defects which he finds there. Finally he suggests what he thinks will avert a possible clash. Briefly, this will involve a dependence on the essential spirituality of the Russian soul as exhibited in Russian literature instead of the doctrine of class struggle espoused by the Communists, and on the development of spiritual leadership in the West.

It is an easy step from this analysis of the issues existing between Russia and the West and the distinction between the Communist philosophy and the real nature of the Russian people to a first hand account of the Russians as they live their lives under the Communist regime. For this we turn to Admiral Stevens' article "The Russian People." As United States naval attaché in Moscow for two years and a long time student of the Russian language and literature, he is well equipped to write about the Russian people, whom he was able to observe closely as he traveled about the country. He is careful to



emphasize the complexities of Russian character and history. As Malik is impressed by the spirituality expressed by Russian writers, so Stevens points out their humanitarianism. He emphasizes the necessity of our understanding the Russian people if we are to overcome the Communist menace.

Although Russia is undoubtedly the principal antagonist of the West, Russia is only part of the rest of the World. In our third and fourth articles we turn first to Asia as a whole in "America and Asia the Dividing Gulf" by Yusuf Buch, a journalist born in Kashmir, and second more specifically to India, often considered the leader of Asia, in "An Unsentimental Look at India" by Harry D. Gideonse, the President of Brooklyn College, who took a close look at that country during an intensive ten-week trip.

Buch finds the essential problem that of finding some way of bridging the gulf between America and Asia. Primarily he thinks it a matter of developing a new interpretation of America to Asia—an interpretation which will present America as a whole so as to offset the partial impressions which Asians get at the present time from our exported movies, cheap magazines, and automobiles. This interpretation must be presented, he asserts, independently of opposition to Communism and must make clear the American desire for social justice.

Gideonse discusses some of the problems presented by India's attitude toward the United States and finds a good many causes of misunderstanding in India itself. Prominent among these is the difficulty of reconciling the preaching of renunciation, which has been so prominent a part of Indian philosophy, with the necessity for hard work and effort to produce the material goods which India so desperately needs. He cites also Indian failure to understand the purposes and attitudes of the United States as well as the problems of language, education, and agriculture in India. We must, he feels, continue our attempts to help India understand and to assist her economically. He sees also certain groups within India which give more promise of understanding present necessities than does the present leadership.

These are but glimpses into the complexities which beset the West in dealing with the rest of the world. They open up a field which must be of absorbing interest to anyone who wishes to understand the world in which he must live.

## CHARLES MALIK

born 1906, educated at the American University at Beirut and at Harvard, is the envoy of Lebanon to the United States and his country's delegate to the United Nations. He is the author of *War and Peace and Problem of Asia* as well as a contributor to periodicals [From a statement made by Mr. Malik before the Political Committee of the General Assembly of the UN on November 23, 1949, published under the title *War and Peace* by The National Committee for Free Europe, reprinted by permission of the author.]

### *War and Peace*

#### THE COMMUNIST DOCTRINE OF WAR AND REVOLUTION

Peace presupposes mutual trust. Without the confidence, the sincere and convinced confidence, of one party in the peaceful nature of the ultimate motives and objectives of the other, there can be no sense of security, and therefore no peace.

Rightly or wrongly, the non-Communist world is convinced that Communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular do not really want peace; that every peace offensive on the part of the Soviet Union is but a strategic or tactical war-device determined by the particular situation of international relations and by the particular stage of the development of Communism. In reality just a phase of an over-all war plan.

It is this that we must examine. We must determine whether this deep-seated conviction of the non-Communist world, of the common man as well as the leaders of Western democracies, is justified or not. The question is not: Is the Western world really thus convinced? The question is: Is the Western world justified in being thus convinced?

To answer this crucial question, we have to turn to the Soviet Union itself and not to the Western world—to the record and practice of the Communist State in the past, and primarily to the teachings of Communism about the past, the present and the future.

Fortunately, the answer to this question is not far to seek. For there is an essential relationship between Communist philosophy and practice. The leaders of the Communist movement have also been its teachers and masters. Every decisive action undertaken by the Communist parties or the Communist States has been the direct result of a certain aspect of Communist philosophy, and the Communist teachers have invariably devoted considerable time and energy to the clarification of that aspect of the Communist ideology which sheds particular light upon, and determines the course of the action in question. Communism is an ideology

formulated for, and unfolding itself in, and conditioning the course of a movement. It is to this ideology that we must turn to answer our question What is then the Communist philosophy of revolution?

An examination of classical Marxism and its orthodox Soviet interpretation reveals four fundamental theses of Marxism with respect to revolution. These are *first*, Marxism is essentially a revolutionary doctrine, *secondly*, the revolutionary change of the structure of society from the so-called bourgeois to the so-called proletarian pattern, which is the objective of the Communist movement, can be achieved only through the forcible overthrow of the existing regimes and the violent seizure of power, *thirdly*, even though the Communist revolution may succeed, and the dictatorship of the proletariat may be established securely in one country or a few countries, such success cannot be complete or secure unless it contributes effectively to the victory of the revolution in all countries, and, *fourthly*, even though the rise and the victory of the Communist revolution, in one country and eventually in all countries, is an inevitable result of the nature of capitalism and its final stage, imperialism, yet this inevitable result can and should be accelerated and actualized by human effort, namely by the action of Communist parties and States. Upon the truth of these four theses all the orthodox teachers of Communism agree.

In view of this Communist doctrine of revolution, is it any wonder that the non-Communist world sincerely and clearly believes that Communism and the Communist State mean world-wide revolution, the wholesale overthrow of existing regimes in all countries? Is it any wonder that the non-Communist world must look after its own defenses? So long as the Communist ideology is the foundation and determinant of Soviet policy, is it not absolutely stupid and naïve to suppose that the Soviet Union can really have a genuine desire for the security and stability of the rest of the world? Is it not obvious, except to the blind or frightened, that the only 'peace' allowable by Communism is the peace of a forcibly communized and totalitarianly regimented world? Faced with the olive branches which Soviet spokesmen offer, we can only conclude that they are cynical if temporary tactics imposed by the present situation of international relations and valid only so long as this situation continues to prevail. They carry no assurance whatsoever that Communism has given up its own form of aggression. For, corresponding to the Communist outlook on historical development and international relations, there is a Communist form of threat to the peace *sui generis*, and international peace, as well as the security, stability, and sovereignty of non-Communist states, may be threatened not merely by the open attack of a Communist state against their borders, but also by its provocation and support

of Communist revolutions within their borders. And therefore the non-Communist world will be perfectly stupid, and indeed about to dissolve, if it does not look feverishly to its own defenses against possible Communist aggression, whether external or internal, and if it does not seek adequately to meet the challenge of the Soviet Union.

The totalitarian control by the state of every source of independence and freedom is absolutely contrary to nature and man. That the state, the mere organ of government and order, is the source of every law, every truth, every norm of conduct, every social and economic relationship, that no science, no music, no economic activity, no philosophy, no art, no theology, is to be permitted except if it is state licensed and state-controlled—all this is so false, so arrogant, so autocratic and tyrannical that no man who has drunk deep from the living waters of the Western Platonic-Christian tradition can possibly accept it. The State does not come in the first place, it comes in the tenth or fifteenth place. The University is higher than the State, the tradition of free inquiry is higher than the State, the Church is higher than the State, the family is higher than the State, natural law is higher than the State, the intimate circle of love and friendship is higher than the State, God is higher than the State, within limits, free economic activity is higher than the State. Far from the State determining the proper nature and limits of autonomy of these other things, they set proper limits to the activity of the State, so that if the State trespasses these limits, it ceases to be the State—it becomes a tyrant. By the word 'higher' I mean that the University, the Church, the family, etc., contain certain sources of truth and being that are not only utterly independent of the State and belong to a separate realm altogether, but that this truth and being is qualitatively superior to any truth and being belonging to the State as such, so that a ruler, or king, or dictator, passing a scientist, or mother, or priest, or saint, or lover, or philosopher, should take off his hat and bow to him or her in all respect, and should in addition sit at his or her feet and learn truths which his State could never teach him. The destruction of all this intermediate plenum of freedom is the most grievous sin committed by totalitarianism, of whatever stripe.

Because man is a rational being, the evil of his own doing always has its origin in an error of his mind. I shall now list the eight basic errors committed by the metaphysics of Communism, and contrast them in each case with the truth of the Western positive tradition.

1 That ultimate reality is through and through matter. The truth is that besides matter and utterly irreducible to it, there is an independent and superior reality, namely mind and spirit.

2 The proper attribute of reality is change and strife. The truth is that

there is a changeless and stable order of existence on which the mind can really rest

3 There is no objective and eternal truth The truth is that such a truth exists, and that only by humbly seeking and finding it can we achieve genuine understanding and real peace

4 Only the immanent and temporal exist The truth is that there is a whole dimension of transcendent norms fully accessible to the mind and heart.

5 There is no God The truth is that there is a God Who is the loving Father of all of us, including those who deny Him, and Who is the Creator of heaven and earth and the Lord of history

6 That, so far as the nature of things is concerned, only the tradition of Democritus, Lucretius, Feuerbach and Marx is right The truth is that this materialist tradition is thoroughly absorbed by the more concrete positive tradition from Plato and Aristotle to Hegel and Whitehead

7 Man is perfectible by his own self sufficient efforts The truth is that man has a certain inherent perversity of which he can only be cured by transcendent aid

8 The human person is for the sake of society and the state The truth is that society and the state are for the sake of the human person

This is the sort of metaphysics which inspires Communism, and this is the kind of world which it seeks to realize here on earth For all its genuine passion for social and economic justice, and for all its enduring positive achievements, the Communist world and ideal is nevertheless a materialistic atheistic, dialectical, relativistic, purely immanent (i.e., this worldly) and man made, totalitarian world and ideal I must conclude from all this that it is not true that Communist existence justifies the Communist revolution, even if the end justified the means

### THE RUSSIAN SOUL

We can thank God Communism does not exhaust the Russian spirit This spirit is much deeper than the militant Communism which today disturbs the world It is true that Communism is the established religion of the Soviet Government today, but the hope of peace resides in the unextinguished fire of truth and love which certainly smolders in the Russian heart It is impossible to understand and meet the Soviet challenge without a minimum of acquaintance with the greatest Russian literature of the nineteenth century This literature, in all its beauty and pathos and freedom, reflects the mysterious depths of the Russian soul far more authentically than the monotonously true to the party line dialectical disquisitions of the Soviet representatives

Russian literature reveals the tragic sufferings of the Russian soul

There are revealed utterly new dimensions of suffering and self-estrangement

It has been the peculiar calling of the Russian soul, it seems, to struggle and suffer. Pain, distress, suffering for the salvation of the world—all this has been its special stigmata. As Berdyāev, a master interpreter of things Russian, has put it: "They are in the throes of religious anguish, they seek salvation—that is the characteristic of Russian creative writers, they seek salvation, thirst to make expiation, they suffer for the world."

There is the most curious passage, often in one and the same person, from the extreme of asceticism to the extreme of sensuality. Russian literature is permeated with the sense of contradiction, contrast, extremes, antithesis, antinomy.

There is no trace of halfheartedness and mediocrity: things must be wholehearted, robust, full, elemental, carried to their logical conclusion, or else they are not Russian. The Russian soul everlastingly itches to make a clean slate of things, to take the very process of creation itself into its own hands, to pass beyond every measure and every limit, walking perilously on the brink of the precipice.

There is the profound universalism of Pushkin which was so wonderfully depicted by Dostoyevsky in his famous speech of 1880: in absolute receptivity, a complete identification with every state of man, everywhere.

There is thus the deepest craving for human brotherhood, for the most radical elimination of all difference and all distinction.

Dostoyevsky said: "Among all nations the Russian soul, the genius of the Russian people is, perhaps, most apt to embrace the idea of the universal fellowship of man, of brotherly love."

Maturing into self-consciousness amidst terrific social dislocation and estrangement, the Russian soul developed a revolutionary vision of equality and social justice. Everywhere in Russian literature there is the quest for a better world, for the transformation of reality into the likeness of heaven.

Communism, in its atheistic, materialistic, Marxian strain, is foreign to the deepest and highest in Russian literature, but there is a genuine spiritual ground in the Russian soul which enabled atheistic Communism to foist itself on it, and that is the sense of communion, sharing, belonging, the sense of 'sobornost' realized by the faithful in the Church. The sense of "the other," of "the presence," where this 'present other' is a loving person, a "thou," is, to my knowledge, nowhere more vividly illustrated than in classical Russian literature.

There is, furthermore, a profound disdain for culture, a demand that culture justify itself before it be admitted. Russian nihilism is the negation of the primacy of culture.

The prodigious German power at abstraction is wholly non-Russian. Russian philosophy and literature is always a quest after a way of life, never after abstract ideas. That is why Dostoyevsky is, no matter what my Soviet friends think of him, perhaps the greatest Russian thinker.

A clearly discernible motif is the quest for wholeness, completeness, unity. There is the mystical burning for absorption and reconciliation, a self-projection onto an ultimate universal harmony. The Russian soul at its best is consumed by a mystical flame of the purest type.

Rebelling against things as they are, in mystical communion with things as they ought to be, the Russian soul has tended to be apocalyptic, eschatological, prophetic. *The Possessed* by Dostoyevsky is a remarkable prophetic delineation of the character of the Russian revolution.

The deepest characterization of the Russian soul is perhaps that it manifests a genuine religious consciousness. Therefore nothing is more really alien to its essence than materialism and an ideology informed by hatred.

The Russian soul is thus complex. Communism does not exhaust it. In a magically contracted world the Slavic genius cannot fail to make itself felt. Even if the Tsarist regime had not been overthrown, but had itself embarked on a policy of progressive industrialization, today, in the geopolitical balance of power, the world would still face a great Russian problem. It is absolutely absurd and stupid to entertain the hope that 250 million Slavs, with their great vitality and culture, with the infinite material resources at their command, and whether or not they are ruled by Communists, can simply be dismissed or ignored by the rest of the world. Whatever one's attitude towards Communism as a final and comprehensive world view, certainly the one unpardonable sin in international relations today is to hate, or to wish ill, the Russian people as such. We shall always have to live with our Russian neighbour. Consequently, the hope of peace is that the Russian soul may assert the more universal spiritual side of itself.

The forces of peace and understanding have two allies in Russia: our common humanity, and the best that there is in the Russian spirit. There is hope because Mr. Vyshinsky is not only a Communist, he is also a human being and a Russian. When our common humanity and the deep Russian spirituality get the better of the Russian rulers, there will be real prospects for peace. But so long as Communism has the upper hand, with its doctrine of war and revolution, all peace is an absolute mirage.

## CRITIQUE OF THE WEST

It is fairly easy to work out a critique of Communism. The doctrine is only a hundred years old, and its effective entrenchment in

satisfy man's deepest cravings for friendship and understanding and truth and love

Politically the West will not serve the cause of peace by allying itself with dark regimes just because it is more expedient not to disturb them. Such regimes are running sores on the body politic of humanity. The West must be honest enough to rebuke and challenge them. It must firmly lead them into the broad ways of responsible change. Their peoples are poised to see whether the West acts from principle or from expediency. And the subversive whispers of world revolution become more and more potent the more these peoples despair of their rulers and the West.

Nor does it do merely to reject Communism. A positive alternative must be suggested. The only effective answer to Communism is a genuine spiritualized materialism which seeks to remove every trace of social injustice without loss of the higher values which constitute the very soul of the West. Communism cannot be met by a mere *no*, it requires a mighty *yea* which will do full justice to man's material needs but will at the same time place them in their subordinate position in the scale of values.

The complaint is often made that our debates in the United Nations degenerate into 'propaganda.' But propaganda can be overcome only by lifting the quality of debate to a higher plane. If profound ideological themes were introduced, then all attempts at propaganda would appear silly and crude. If there is propaganda, it is only because there is on the other hand ideological impotence. The tragedy of the world today is that the traditions which embody the deepest truth are not bothering clearly, sufficiently, responsibly, boldly to articulate themselves.

Nor is it sufficient in this cruel century to be happy and self sufficient. You must step forth and lead, and not only in material things. It is not enough to realize good institutions and to leave it to others to copy them. For man isn't only an ape: he does not only mimic the good example of others. Man thirsts after ideas. If the habits and institutions of the West are not adapted for the production of a ringing message, full of content and truth, satisfying the mind, appealing to the heart, firing the will, a message on which one can stake his whole life, then in the present world, in which there is, perhaps as never before, a universal hunger for truth and justice and rest, the West cannot lead. Leadership must pass on to others, no matter how perverted and false these others might be. For the Logos prefers and can finally utilize a false prophet far better than no prophet at all.

If your only export in these realms is the silent example of flourishing political institutions and happy human relations, you cannot lead. If your only export is a distant reputation for wealth and prosperity and order,



you cannot lead Nor can you really lead if you send forth to others only expert advice and technical assistance To be able to lead and save yourself and others, you must above everything else address their mind and soul Your tradition, rooted in the glorious Græco-Roman Hebrew-Christian-Western European humane outlook, supplies you with all the necessary presuppositions for leadership All you have to do is to be the deepest you already are The challenge of this epoch is not Communism, but is whether Western society, conceived in the joyous liberties of the Greek city states and nurtured on Christian charity, can still recover from the worship of false and alien gods and return to its authentic sources The challenge of the moment is whether modern man, distracted and overwhelmed by himself and by the world, can still regain the original integrity of his soul

Whatever be the weakness and decadence of the West, it still has one saving glory the University is free, the Church is free It is a great thing to preserve unbroken the tradition of free inquiry started by Plato and Aristotle, and the tradition of love started by God Truth can still be sought and God can still be loved and proclaimed in joy and freedom And this fact alone is going to save us It will not be by pacts, or by atomic bombs, or by economic arrangements, or by the United Nations, that peace will be established, but by the freedom of the Church and the University each to be itself Communism does not know what it has done when it subjected the Church and the University to its own dictates

### CONCLUSION

Mr Vyshinsky's resolution calls for the conclusion of a Five-Power Pact as the best method of ending the present tension But would such a Pact really do anything to remove the mutual distrust and fear which now seize both worlds? It has been amply demonstrated in this debate that there are plenty of pacts already, including the greatest of them all, the Charter of the United Nations What is needed therefore is not new pacts, but fundamental modification of position, a real change of heart.

One thing must be clear to Mr Vyshinsky, and that is that the non-Communist world is by now fully awake to its dangers If Communism believes that the clash is inevitable, it must realize that the non-Communist world is not going to be caught napping

In my opinion it is an illusion to suppose that the sheer employment of masterly tactics, such as warmongering propaganda or the offering of peace pacts, is going to frighten anybody, or dull him into a sense of false security In my opinion, furthermore, Communism will deceive

only itself if it thinks that the Western world is so decadent that Communism can choose at will its own hour of striking

But if the clash is coming, as Communist dogma has been teaching for thirty years, postponement will serve only to allow both sides time in which the better to prepare. This is the frightful meaning of the present arms race. Postponement has significance only if it is utilized to induce those fundamental changes in position which may avert the clash.

What forms might such changes take?

We must hope and pray that the leaders of the Soviet Union will reconsider and alter their present determination to shut off their country, their people, their minds, from the rest of the world. It is an ultimate injustice to the world to deny it free access to the great immeasurable riches of the Russian mind and of the Russian scene. The world yearns to know Russia, and the Russian people, with their sense of a universal mission, yearns to embrace the world. Let this embracement be one of love and brotherhood, and not of revolution and bloodshed. Let the Soviet leaders open their minds and their country to the traveller, the student, the pilgrim, and let them allow their citizens to come out from behind their fastness, to study in our schools, to share in our world.

Every point of contact which still exists between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world must be preserved and enlarged, on whatever level. New points of contact must be sought. All of us here find it hopeful that we are still able to talk freely across this table with our Soviet friends, that we are still *together*, if not in agreement. Mr. Vyshinsky has done the cause of peace a real service in opening this debate, in enabling us to open our hearts to him in freedom, in sitting with us humbly and listening to and perhaps bearing with our folly. But this is not enough: there must be a genuine communion of minds, genuine modification of position, genuine cooperation in the fields of science, art, scholarship.

We must hope and pray that the Soviet Government will allow the Russian people to assert again their hidden spirituality, will give full play to the capacity of the Russian people, so often proven in the past, to create great works of religious art, to perform great acts of faith, to show great manifestations of saintliness.

We must hope and pray, too, that the Communists will everywhere abandon their doctrines of revolution and class struggle, without losing any of their longing and passion for a better world, that they will express this abandonment *ex cathedra* by fundamental modification of doctrine, that they will no longer expect await and thus contribute to bring about revolutionary changes in other countries. The non Communist world must feel at ease with the Communists, and thus it can never do so long

as it knows that the Communists wait only for the day of its damnation.

We must hope and pray that there will develop in the Western world a mighty spiritual movement which will rediscover and reaffirm its glorious hidden values, and fulfill mankind's longing for a more just order of things, a more beautiful world, a New Heaven and a New Earth. Modern man sees before him the possibility of universal plenty for the first time in history, and grasps at any doctrine which seems to promise him the fulfillment of his dream. To ask of Communism to change its nature, without satisfying the need to which it is a response, is to offer the world not bread, but a stone.

Communism is a doctrine of despair. Its only and complete answer therefore lies in the existence of hope. If the Western world can show a way to eradicate the shame and scandal of poverty, of exploitation, of oppression, of greed, without resort to social revolution and class-struggle and dictatorship: if it can place these material values in their proper subordinate place within the context of a mighty spiritual movement which will be revolutionary without being subversive, and which will draw its substance from the infinite riches of the Western positive tradition, then the necessity for Communism will vanish, and the spectre which now walks the earth will be laid forever.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. List the four points making up the Communist doctrine of revolution.
2. Why does Malik believe that the West would be foolish not to look to its defenses against Communism?
3. What eight errors of Communism does Malik cite?
4. Summarize Malik's analysis of the Russian soul.
5. What weaknesses and strengths does the West have in the struggle for leadership?
6. What changes does Malik think necessary both in Russia and the West?
7. Trace the development of Malik's thought in this essay. Where does he start and how does he proceed from point to point to a conclusion?
8. Comment on Malik's use of questions. How many of them are real questions and how many imply an answer? What are the dangers in the use of the latter kind of question?
9. In two instances Malik makes use of the device of listing items by number. What are the virtues of this device? Are there any difficulties in its use?
10. Characterize the style of this essay. To what kind of audience is it presumably addressed?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. To what extent is it possible to reach valid conclusions about a nation's soul by analyzing its literature?

- 2 In view of the seriousness of the world situation, what advantages can you see in a more extensive study of the Russian language and literature in our colleges?
- 3 Are there any indications in recent developments that the Communists may be changing their policies?
- 4 In what sense is the diversity of idea and opinion in the West a good or a bad thing?
- 5 What practical steps can be taken to develop more effective leadership in the West?
- 6 Do you think that Malik has effectively refuted the eight points of Communist doctrine which he lists? How much agreement would there be in the West on the truths which he states in refutation of Communist errors?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 The United States as a nation of gadgeteers
- 2 The United Nations role in the prevention of armed conflict.
- 3 Education for leadership
- 4 The necessity of understanding Communism

### ADMIRAL LESLIE C. STEVENS

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## *The Russian People*

### *I*

The more the Soviet Union becomes the villain on the world stage, the more we tend to be sweeping in blaming "the Russians," without going much beyond the fact that they are a perplexing nation which is obviously composed of oppressors as well as oppressed. We don't expect a Chinese to act like anything other than a Chinese. But the Russian, who has great charm when he is frankly Russian, is at his worst when he is trying to be European. One is always caught off guard by the illusion that he is

a Westerner, and rather unreasoningly resentful when he fails to act consistently like one

The only prudent rule to follow, and one which constitutes a great stride towards understanding, is never to expect a Russian to act as we would act under similar circumstances, for he is influenced by different values than we, or at least applies different weights to such values as we hold in common. Things that seem important to us, or which we are in the habit of assuming or expecting, do not have the same importance for Russians, and their habits have formed in other channels

Take the case of Lenin's tomb. It is difficult to imagine Franklin Roosevelt, or even the less controversial Queen Victoria, lying in pomp for a generation under glass, all but breathing, like the Sleeping Beauty, while great queues of people stand patiently in line in storm and snow and sun hour after hour through the years to witness. The values involved in deciding to put Lenin on permanent display are bold, dramatic, and moving, and they are certainly not European

When I saw the state funeral of Zhdanov, the only member of the Politburo to die in recent years, I caught a glimpse of darker values. It was on a showery September afternoon, with heavy, tumbled, dark blue clouds and little intervals of pale, cold sunshine. The broad street outside the Home of the Soviets, where Zhdanov's body had been lying, was such a great mass of flowers and wreaths that the people carrying them could scarcely be seen. At last, well beyond the scheduled time, the bands began the slow, sad, majestic Chopin music, a gigantic portrait of Zhdanov started down the street, followed by a train of Marshals carrying Zhdanov's decorations in their hands, and the crowded heaps of flowers and wreaths began to move behind them like a forest. After them came four men carrying the scarlet coffin's lid, and then, half propped up in the red coffin, riding on a gun caisson, the body. Its face was deathly pale, yellowish waxy, and so startlingly different from all the thousands of other faces that it was easy to pick it out as far as the cortege, following the Burnam Wood of green wreaths and flowers, could be seen. It was Death itself—the Great Doom's image.

As always in Russia, there were many strange rumors surrounding Zhdanov's death, centering in the possibility of an unseen struggle for power on the part of a man who had perhaps begun to build up a following. As I left the balconies of the Embassy, it came to my mind that in the days of the False Dmitri and the Time of Troubles, there were so many impostors and false claimants to power that the bones of the real Dmitri were carried publicly through the streets to convince the people that he was dead. The impostor, or self-proclaimed, has always flourished in Russia as in no other land. There have been literally scores of enigmatic

claimants to the throne, many of whom, perhaps with good reason, were completely convinced of their high origin. Although the reasons why the impostor should be so compatible with Russia are curious, and his involved story sheds light on the depths of Russian personality, it is enough to note that rather positive steps have been taken to convince the people that such figures as Lenin and Zhdanov are permanently in their last resting places.

There is a Russian proverb which says, "The soul of a stranger is darkness." The Russians are stranger and more alien to us than any European people, they are full of dualities and contradictions, and with a natural talent and affinity for what seems to us to be deviousness and cunning, but which to them seems something quite different, carrying no opprobrium. There are many barriers to understanding this gifted people, and more of them today than ever before are deliberately fostered by the rulers of Russia. One way of going about the problem is by a consideration of origins.

Although the ethnographic complexities of the country are enormous and there are many Russias which can be separated only in vague and overlapping ways, the unifying force, the governing power, the predominant culture and language, is that of the Great Russians, and it is generally they whom we mean when we speak of Russians. The north-central heart of European Russia is their homeland, but they are everywhere throughout the vast areas in varying numbers.

The origins of the Great Russians are obscure, and have long been a subject for debate. Sarmatians, Scythians, Khazars, Huns, Goths, Vikings, Bulgars, Finns, and wave after wave of Asiatics must have left their mark. Although the familiar Russian proverb says "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar," it is very annoying to most Russians to suggest that they are Asiatics rather than Europeans. Few Englishmen question the profound effects of the Norman invasion on the English character, and there is no valid reason why Russians should question the imprint of Asia, culminating in three hundred comparatively recent years of Tartar rule and occupation. Russians are much closer than Europeans to the great Asiatic life sources, in time as well as in space. Their reaction is probably due to the fact that the Russians themselves, including Lenin, have long used "Asiatic poverty" as a common phrase to describe former Russian conditions, and to them "Asiatic" has associations with something lower-class, deplorable, and reactionary. Since it is equally annoying to true Asiatics to have the Russians included in their midst, it should be noted that whatever there is of Asia in the Russian heritage is localized, coming from north-central Asia and the

Mongolian steppes and it includes much that is appealing, fine, colorful, and far from derogatory

Evidences of Asia are common in Russia, from the camels of the lower Volga (the terminus of the great camel caravans, before and even after the coming of the railroads, was at Nizhni Novgorod, only some 200 miles from Moscow) to definite characteristics of appearance, architecture, language, and dress. It is only to be expected that their folklore, their native dances, and their music should be colored by Asiatic influences. The intriguing and devious side of the Russian nature, its love of proverbs, its respect for and love of office, its lavishness, its fondness for jewels, gold, and horses, and its subtle and complex attitude towards woman all seem more Eastern than Western.

Secretiveness and suspicion, to an Oriental degree, play their part to make the scale of Russian values different from our own. This has been a Russian trait from Tartar days and before, and it was as marked under the Tsars as today. The Russian has a conspiratorial nature, and in spite of his deep patriotism, intrigues for power in high places have always flourished. It seems almost unnatural for him to take an associate unquestioningly at his face value, and often for good reason. This is natural and fertile soil for the police state, which, in one form or another, has always existed in Russia. The informer, too, is a familiar character. Often forced into his shadowy activities, he pervades all walks of life in Russia today and is a major instrument in maintaining the regime in power. Blackmail, spying, provocateurs, and the physical and moral pressures that are inseparable from the police state are old, old stories there. The revolutionary movements of Tsarist days were highly conspiratorial in nature and were spiced with a danger which has a special fascination for the Russian.

## 2

Although the Russians have their own peculiar pride and self respect, they also have a tendency to self abasement. The low bow is still often accompanied by the very Oriental gesture of a sweeping motion of the outstretched arm to the floor, with two fingers extended. Even more extreme, but seen occasionally, is the gesture of *bit chelom*—literally to beat one's head on the floor. It can be seen in the churches and in the theater in representations of pre Revolutionary life. And only recently in the American Embassy, when a valuable chandelier was dropped through the carelessness of servants, they promptly resorted to that ancient Eastern gesture of abject submission.

I remember the Easter services in the Roman Catholic Church in Moscow. It was gloomy, and a fine, cold rain—half rain and half sleet—

was falling. Even the enclosure around the church was jammed with crowds of Russians, so that we could not drive to the entrance, but had to push our way through on foot. Two or three rows in front had been reserved, and we finally made our way there. One little old lady was on her knees in front, leaning patiently against the wall near the altar as if tired, covered with a great, open knitted, white shawl tied around her throat. Every bit of space was packed with standing people.

The faces in the Russian congregation were wonderful to watch—shawled and kerchiefed women, and bearded, strong faced men. One woman near by read continuously and devoutly from her prayer book, moving her lips slowly as she read. Another kissed her book throughout the service, never taking it from her lips, while others fingered their rosaries. The communion at the end was particularly affecting. Never before had I seen women kneel and place their foreheads on the floor in an Eastern gesture of submission, nor had I seen them come through the aisles to the altar on their knees. And when we finally went out through the rows of poor people at the door—it is not correct or proper to call them beggars—I felt soft lips on my hand. *Batyushka! Mama! Matoushka!* Gentle, musical, long drawn-out Russian words that caught at one's throat.

This strong tendency towards self abasement is important in understanding the attitude of the Soviet government towards "bowing down before foreigners." I have had enough firsthand experience of it to know that in spite of the long campaign of hatred and suspicion against the foreigner, many of these impulsive people give the foreigner even more than his due—they literally and figuratively bow down before him.

It is difficult to see how the present Soviet government, in its own interests of security and self preservation with reference to its own people, could fail to attempt to check this exaggerated tendency. Inferiority complexes and lack of self confidence may have something to do with it, but face saving and its obverse, the putting up of a front, which are related to self abasement, undoubtedly weigh higher in the scale of Russian values, as in Asiatic countries generally, than in the West.

The torrent of abuse that is heaped on America in the Soviet press and radio has in it something of the insincerity of bazaar bickering and revilement. One often hears Russians, apparently with no deep passion or bitterness, cursing each other in a way that would lead to trouble in America or England, and Russians occasionally seem almost surprised that we are as offended as we are by the violence of their propaganda.

All foreigners are struck by the run down appearance of even recent Soviet dwellings and their surroundings. Lack of materials and poor workmanship play their part, together with lack of personal responsibility for results, but one cannot escape the conclusion that the Russian nature



is comparatively insensitive to neatness and order. No one repairs minor breakages, no one cleans away litter and trash, entrances and courts of pretentious buildings are often a sea of mud where only a little effort would be required to make noticeable and convenient improvements. The bones of the woven structure beneath modern Soviet stucco are often laid bare. The severe climate is frequently given as an excuse, but other countries with severe winters produce more serviceable products. The climate cannot account for the general inadequacy of the paving on the main highways, and even the unpaved roads in the little villages would not be quite the unbelievable morasses and traps they are if it were not for this natural trait of insensitive indifference to details which, in the West, would not be tolerated by personal and rudimentary civic pride.

The Asiatic squalor and poverty, against which so many nineteenth-century Russian writers spoke, is perhaps due more to this cast of mind than to perpetual shortages of materials and supplies. Eventually one comes to wonder if the perpetual shortages of Russia are not themselves largely due to this same cause. Even when not aggravated by shiftlessness, there is some sort of difference in Russian standards which we can only regard as a chronic deficiency. I have been in peasant houses in the country which were spotlessly clean within, with the soft wood worn away from continual scrubbing yet the immediate surroundings outside were disorderly and dirty.

A universal complaint of all Western engineers who have had to supervise installations and construction in Russian is the lack of foresight and planning with which the work is carried out. The rigging and handling of heavy loads has pained nearly all of these Westerners. Cars and trucks are loaded without regard to clearances through which they must be moved, and there is a general hand-to-mouth attitude that we regard as slovenly. Valuable equipment is continually being damaged because of sheer disorder and bad handling rather than from any lack of understanding of its value or method of functioning. This is not always due to laziness, for the actual work to be done is often increased thereby.

On one overnight trip in 1948, I went to sleep under a luxurious, long-haired, thick blanket in as comfortable a sleeping car as I have ever seen—made in Germany. Sure, Russia probably can make them, and perhaps does, but this one had German markings on all its specially designed plumbing, and undoubtedly came out of Germany and not out of the communist economy.

The next morning I woke late, just before we pulled into Minsk. We went very slowly past a wreck—four or five sleepers, including one at least like ours, lying on their sides, and propped with crutches at odd angles to keep them from rolling down the steep embankment. The roadbed seemed to have given way, for it looked loose and sandy and

ragged, and there were no rails at all to be seen for part of the space under the wreck. It was obviously something that had just happened, from the position and condition of the cars.

"Good God! When did that happen?" I asked the porter.

"Long, long ago," he said, with a sly smile.

"War damage, no doubt," I said, with a hoot.

"Yes, of course. It happened during the war." And the porter walked off with an air of finality.

One marked trait of the Russians that undoubtedly affects their lack of tidiness is their Asiatic attitude towards time. They seem incapable of appreciating time in the same sense as we, and it seems to them less important. Vast numbers of Russians fill the railroad stations and air terminals, waiting for trains and airplanes with a patience and indifference that is unimaginable in the West. Sometimes they camp there for days. Travelers have pointed out that this Oriental indifference to time constituted a major problem for the present regime, adding plausibly that it is only in the present generation that the great mass of the people have become familiar with watches and clocks. The punishments for tardiness at work which we regard as fantastically savage, sometimes extending even to serious labor camp sentences, can best be explained as being regarded by the regime as necessary to educate the people out of their inherent ways. Both the Eastern time sense and the manifestations in the Russians of what we would call indifference and carelessness are indications that they tend naturally to place their own values on many things, and that those values are not the same as ours. They would say that they do not break their lives over trifles.

### 3

The conditioning of history has obviously had much to do with making the Russians what they are. Many of their fine and admirable qualities seem to be the result of tempering through hardship and trial. Their long suffering patience, their humility, and their genuine broad love for humanity, as well as their rebelliousness, are due in no small measure to an age-old need for social justice. Soviet Russia is very like what it professes to be in that it is a nation of workers and peasants, and these characteristics have been impressed upon the masses of the people, who have always been ground between the millstones. Yet the "dictatorship of the proletariat" is a misleading phrase, for it is the Party alone that is master in Russia, and the people still stand in need of individual justice in terms of personal freedom.

Russia never experienced the Renaissance and the Reformation, which have largely determined the basic character of the Europe of today. She had no part in the Crusades, which reached their culmination at the

precise time she went under the Tartar yoke, and she was under Tartar domination when chivalry was a formative factor in the West. Opposed to this negative experience, we find a positive factor in Russia's almost continuous exposure to wars and invasions. As a result the Russians consider their country another Belgium, a cockpit of Eurasia rather than of Europe, and a desirable prize for conquest in the eyes of other lands.

A unique aspect of major importance was serfdom. Some 20 million serfs, one third of the entire population at the time, were emancipated in 1861, so that there are countless Russians today whose grandparents were born to a condition of genuine slavery. The legal and economic problems which were involved in the abolition of serfdom were extremely complex and have never been completely solved. There is little doubt that serfdom and its later problems have left a strong imprint on the national character and conscience.

The Russians are so full of what seem to us to be dualities and contradictions that generalizations about them require definition and explanation beyond similar appraisals of peoples who are more familiar to us. One of these apparent contradictions lies in their genuine wide sympathy for downtrodden humanity, which exists side by side with a toughness and hardness that sometimes seems insensitive and callous. There are Asiatic tribesmen within the Soviet Union who are today as wild and savage as the hordes of Jenghis Khan, and Cossacks who are as capable of pogroms as their fathers under the Tsars. But by and large the Great Russians are distinguished by an emotional humanitarianism, varying widely, of course, with individuals.

This Russian humanitarianism came to a great flowering of expression in the nineteenth century. The liberal literature of that time set a high mark for the world which has perhaps never been surpassed, and it is still a great heritage of the Russian people. The broad sympathies of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, Pushkin, and a host of other Russian writers whose names are less familiar in the West, are still those of the Russians of today. Except where it conflicts with ideology or sheds too unfavorable a light on the operating code of that ideology, as in much of Dostoevsky, that literature is still taught in Russian schools, and forms an admirable part of the mental and ethical equipment of most Russians.

Sympathy for the downtrodden is natural to the Russian because he himself knows so well what it is to be downtrodden. His sometimes contrasting indifference stems partly from a feeling of helplessness in the face of the universality of suffering, and partly from the inherent differences between theory and practice which are not experienced by the Russians alone. It is noteworthy that the literature on Soviet prison life, written by people who have experienced it, so often stresses the im-

personality of abuse when it occurs, and remarks on how rare it is that the enforcers of the system, unlike those in Germany, seem to take pleasure in cruelty or brutality. Brutality is more apt to take place because the system demands it. By and large, the Great Russians are a decent folk with a well developed conscience which is generalized rather than personalized. Although they say that only people who are secure can be idealists, the Russians know what idealism is and value it in the abstract. In the interaction between their basically ethical character and the realities of their daily lives we see the contradiction of an almost mystical value placed on personal comradeship in a land where the resources for implementing such comradeship are pitifully lacking, and where, more often than not, to be comradely is dangerous.

We necessarily hear more about the millions of victims in the prison camps than about the countless Russians who have helped many of the victims in one way or another, usually at great risk to themselves. The condemned have always been regarded in Russia as unfortunates. In spite of all that Russia suffered at the hands of the Germans, there was no animus in the attitude of the Moscow crowds toward the long lines of prisoners passing through from Stalingrad.

The Russian nature runs to extremes, and sometimes extreme opposites are embodied in a single individual. Without perverting the truth we may say that the Russian craves material things in a way that makes greed and oppression a perennial problem, and also that he is sympathetic and bighearted, with a tremendous feeling for human equality. Above all, he is, in his way, an individualist, with a high degree of inner independence beneath the expediences of surface conformity.

This individualism is seen in his attitude toward government and authority, for which he has no natural respect and affinity, but which he rather regards with something of the distrust, dislike, and native cunning shown by the hunted to the hunters. It was government and authority which imposed serfdom on him, and it was only in 1600, at the time of Boris Godunov, that serfdom became an institution which seriously interfered with the Russian tradition of freedom. Before that time the Tartars interfered little with that freedom, usually being content to take their due in tribute, and no millennium followed either the abolition of serfdom or the coming of communism.

The Russian's inner independence is not much concerned with problems of social and political organization, but it is personalized and emotional. He has never known the sort of organized safeguards of the individual against government and authority which developed through the centuries in the Magna Carta, the Anglo-Saxon common law, and the American Bill of Rights, and his sort of freedom is comparatively more primitive. Unlike the disciplined Teuton, he has never accepted

any authority which he instinctively distrusts—just because it was authority—and, with all his patience, he has a passionate and stormy nature

The fondness that most Russians have for one of Lermontov's poems is an indication that it expresses something deep in their nature. No translation can carry the music of the Russian language, but it might be put in English like this —

A lonely sail shows white and bleak  
Against the misty blue of sea  
What far land's promise does it seek?  
What left behind in native lea?

'Mid whistling wind and billows might  
Its bending mast inclines and creaks  
Alas! It flees not from delight,  
Nor is it happiness it seeks

Beneath, the bright waves azure swarm,  
Above, the sun's soft golden fleece,  
But he, rebellious, seeks the storm,  
As if in tempests there were peace

For more than a hundred years this expression has had a peculiar fascination for the Russian. It is often quoted in conversation and in literature, used as titles and themes of books, and known by heart by almost everyone.

This stormy and rebellious nature seems to be recognized by today's regime, which is well aware of the hundreds upon hundreds of uprisings that have taken place in the countryside throughout Russia's history. Today the individual Russian is remarkably free to blow off steam, provided only that he does not get political in so doing. One quiet night I was awakened by police whistles and a prolonged and unusual squealing of brakes in the big square between the Kremlin and the American chancery where I lived. Outside the windows was a light, drizzling fog which made the expanse of pavement slippery and gave a little Russian automobile driven by a Russian an opportunity for the time of its life. The car was alternately speeding up and braking to skid like a polo pony around the tall light posts with which the square was studded. The dreaded Russian police loomed through the drizzle, converging on foot from all directions, blowing their whistles and holding out their arms as if they were trying to catch a chicken. At last the cavorting car came to a stop. I fully expected the hilarious driver to be visited with some terrible retribution, but after a long conversation the police dispersed and the man drove quietly away, alone.

Again and again I have seen individual Russians create disturbances

which have been handled more gently and tolerantly by the dreaded MVD than similar disturbances would have been handled by the police of New York or Chicago. I have seen them argue by the hour with a drunk, only to let him go. More important, I believe that there are many of these individualistic, suspicious, stormy people, with their strong ethical bias, who would not be responsive to a government which professed to be founded on authority, or even on force, nor to a government which appealed to self-interest rather than to ethical concepts.

The loyalty of large numbers of Russians to the regime seems capable of explanation only on the grounds that they believe in it, and that they consider their belief to be not a blind faith, but founded on rational science. There have been very many instances of innocent Russians who suffered under the regime but still retained their belief, thinking to the end that their own torment was due to the malfunctioning of a basically ethical and rational system.

#### 4

The Communist Party, which has been deliberately limited to 2 per cent or less of the population, has captured Russia and holds it to this day by force in much the same way as an occupying force holds a territory after a war. We regard the Red Revolution as having ended successfully about 1922, but the Soviets consider that it is still in process, even in Russia. A Soviet citizen is taught that he must continue to struggle for the Revolution in his daily life, in an even more real sense than we must continue to struggle for our freedoms, for the Revolution is still very far from being as well consolidated anywhere as is the capitalist system. To this day every bridge, canal lock, and important junction in all the Russias is guarded day and night by sentries with fixed bayonets and live ammunition. This is not to say that there is not considerable popular and non-Party support for the regime, but is to keep in proper proportion the fact that the Soviet Union as a state and as a world power is identical with the Communist Party of Bolsheviks and not with the peoples of the Russias or the Russias of the Tsars.

At the end of a protracted discussion of the suppression of academic, nonpolitical freedom of thought in Soviet Russia, a Russian who was by no means a Party member once told me: "At last I see what is bothering you. You do not realize that we are a new nation, and not yet as secure as the older ones. You do not realize that now overriding priority in everything must be given to the safety and future well being of the Party to which we are indebted for our present freedom. Why should any one of us accept the benefits of the state—housing, heat, light, paper, any sort of income—and use those benefits in any way that might not contribute directly and positively to the strength of the Party?"

The Soviet state may be intolerant because it is basically Russian, but it is not intolerant for the sake of intolerance. All the controversies in the Soviet world of arts and sciences are rooted in a fear that if they are not settled as they are, the state may eventually be undermined thereby. The Soviets pride themselves on being the first completely rational and "scientific" civilization that the world has seen, and it is a civilization that is deliberately based on a naïve and positive materialism which has nothing to do with the scientific spirit. All other values are denied, and they are denied because they cannot be clearly proved by materialistic concepts. If the West would take the content of Soviet controversies seriously instead of deriding them, instead of regarding them merely as arbitrary demonstrations of state interference with academic freedom, if it would refute them point by point, the truth would spread that the basic communist philosophy as well as its practical implementation is not "scientific."

The Soviet leaders are not reckless gamblers, nor are they adventurers like those who surrounded Adolf Hitler. They are professional revolutionists and they know their business. As such they have a different background of experience and viewpoint from other leaders. The Party leaders really believe that Wall Street and monopolistic capital control the West. They consider this controlling element to be completely conscious and profoundly Machiavellian, and to be continually laying deep plans aimed not only at greater ill-gotten gains, but towards the defeat of communism. They know that there are other forces at work, but regard them as inherently weak and futile. Misrepresentation on a large scale is regarded as a desirable and necessary means to assist in the overthrow of their basically hostile enemy, capitalism. The extent to which they deceive themselves by such maneuvers is debatable. One often hears the statement that the Party leaders have begun to believe their own propaganda. I think that a more accurate statement would be that they have always believed in its general validity, but that its specific forms remain conscious distortions.

To the uncompromising and irreconcilable Soviets, no solution with the Western world is acceptable except on their own terms, and a military one, with all its hazards, is only one solution among many that are possible. Military conquest brings many problems in its wake, particularly for Russians, and the goal of a communist world controlled by a single Party is not identical with world wide expansion of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, since the use of armed force does bring a solution and often a speedy one, the Western world in elementary prudence must make the military way as hazardous as possible for the Soviets. Steps to implement this prudence became urgent the moment we knew of the Soviet possession of atomic bombs.

Recent communist analyses deal with the thesis that one of the catastrophic economic crises whose periodic occurrences they consider as a fundamental law of capitalism is now active in the West, concealed only by the military buildup. To them the great danger to the Soviet Union lies in the assurance that the capitalist world, driven by the laws of its own nature, lacking expanding markets and faced with these recurring crises, will attack them when it can. There are ways of delaying and even of preventing such an attack, but they must always be prepared for it in case things go wrong. Their ideological reasons for expecting attack are reinforced by their historical experience, by their belief that their land and resources are desirable ends in themselves, by ample evidence of capitalist fear and hatred of communism, and perhaps by the vestiges of a guilty conscience.

The Soviet image of the United States is a distorted one, deliberately warped by their leaders, and yet the Russian people do not accept it without something akin to unvoiced questioning and doubt. They know that there is nothing in their press or radio, their books or theaters or other means of communication, which is not carefully controlled by their government, and which therefore exists for some purpose other than objective information. Moreover, their own memories and experiences tell them that much of what they read and hear is false. As for the rest of it, they neither believe nor disbelieve, but are agnostics. In the nature of things, the Russian knows that he does not know.

There is no more enthusiastic supporter of the regime than the youth who is just finishing his schooling. A Russian in his thirties once said to me: "You can have no idea of the brightness of the dream we had when we were young. It was a shining glory, a heaven on earth. You cannot possibly realize what it meant to come into a new world, where the brotherhood of man seemed really to exist." But when the youth takes his place as a responsible cog in the vast machinery of Russia he comes in contact with the seamy realities of Soviet life, and the dream soon tar-nishes. He may still support the regime, but disillusionment often replaces the enthusiasm of youth.

Most Russians do not question the necessity or even the desirability of substituting propaganda for objective fact, but as they acquire experience and memories with the years, they realize more and more fully that this is done, and what it implies. One result is that, lacking reliable news, all Russia lives on rumor and gossip, in spite of the dangers that are involved. Everything in Russia has its political and ideological aspects, and the more rumor and gossip are concerned with those aspects, the greater the danger.

The American image of Russia is not clearly formed, but wavering and blurred. It is not enough, in peace or war, to declare that we are friends



of the Russian people but not of their masters, for every Russian knows enough about propaganda to expect just that. He is first of all a Russian, and therefore wary and suspicious as a fish in an over-fished stream. If war should come and our assurances are not backed up by some measure of genuine and sympathetic understanding, as distinct from merely using the Russian for our own ends, he will be apt to prefer the Russian devil he knows to the foreign one he neither knows nor understands.

The struggle with the Western world is inherent in communism, and not in the classic relations between Great Powers. However much Soviet communism may be tinged by peculiarly Russian characteristics, neither the Russian people nor their nationalism can be held responsible for the end product. The people have no voice at all in their government, and the net result is that the Russian individual today, as in the past, is a victim of Russian institutions. The Iron Curtain is deliberately used to lessen or destroy his awareness of that fact.

I do not believe that the Russians are responsible as a people for either communism or the present difficult world situation. I am satisfied that our best and probably only chance of keeping a war from being fantastically expensive, protracted, and indecisive in the end will be the genuine possibility of getting a large part of the Russian people on our side. There is much to support this viewpoint, notably the experience of the German armies in the Ukraine, where they were at first met with open arms by the civilian population and hundreds of thousands of military deserters. It is consistent with what nearly all defectors tell us. Many informed people believe strongly that the Germans could have won their war if they had not lost their golden opportunity because of a lack of sympathetic understanding of the Russian people.

The circumstances surrounding our own problem will not be the same, but nevertheless we also will surely lose our opportunity if we do not develop a deeper understanding than was required of the Germans. The more understanding one acquires of the Russian people, the more one realizes that in spite of the darker side of their dualities and contradictions, they not only cannot be held responsible for the acts and policies of the regime, but are capable of far better things and deserve a far better lot than they have today.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What are some of the chief "Asiatic" or "Oriental" characteristics that Admiral Stevens finds in Russians?
2. How does he diagnose the Russian government's reasons for abuse of America in propaganda?

- 3 To what causes does he attribute the squalor and slovenliness he found in Russia?
- 4 What historical causes does he believe are responsible for such apparent contradictions as brutality and sympathy for the down-trodden, individualism and loyalty to the present regime?
- 5 What does he say is the Russian belief about the crises of capitalism?
- 6 What does Admiral Stevens believe is our best course in winning a possible war with Russia?
- 7 What principal point is Stevens attempting to make in Section 1? By what means?
- 8 In Section 2, Stevens discusses three Russian attitudes. Indicate what these attitudes are and the part of the section in which each is treated. How is the section tied together?
- 9 State in a sentence each of the themes or principal ideas of Sections 3 and 4. Point out the specific means used to give clarity and force to each.
- 10 Notice how Stevens has used personal experiences in the presentation of his ideas. What is the effect of the use of such material?
- 11 What are the virtues or deficiencies of the last paragraph as a conclusion to this essay?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Is it inherently more probable that our best course is to learn all we can about Russia, or that our best course is not to waste our efforts in learning but to devote all efforts to military preparations?
- 2 How far do you think the West can depend on the Communists' refraining from attack because they think capitalism will fall by itself?
- 3 What do you think, in the light of Admiral Stevens' analysis, of the possibility of the Communist regime falling from within?

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 The value of studying the Russian language
- 2 How likely is an all-out war with Russia?
- 3 Ways of reaching the Russian people
- 4 The prospects for lessening of international tensions
- 5 How useful is the United Nations?

#### M. YUSUF BUCH

*is a journalist who was born in Kashmir [From The Saturday Review, May 8 1954 reprinted by permission of the author]*

### *America and Asia—The Dividing Gulf*

When an average Asian thinks of America he does not recall Thomas Jefferson and does not remember John Dewey or Reinhold

Niebuhr, he pictures a land of Cadillacs and neon lights and inhumanly vast power projects a land also of glamour gals and bobbysockers and baseball. He thinks that it is a country, earthquake proof, where the tremors of international politics or the hydrogen bomb cause no more than a few headlines. Even at that, the image remains blurred. When he fails to draw it into a manageable focus, a kind of bewilderment results. The energy and opulence that he knows to be the characteristics of American society leave him stumped. He cannot relate himself to it all. He can, no doubt, contrast his state with it. But to contrast is not to assimilate.

And the American's picture of Asia? A continent teeming with people and problems and poverty, threatened by intrigue, riddled with disputes. The squabble over Iranian oil, the antagonism between India and Pakistan, the hostility of the Arab and the Jew, the problems of Korea and Indo-China, and, above all, the general squalor, the chaos—such various phenomena may be politically recognized but they cannot be psychologically understood.

The result is obvious enough—a mental distance, a gulf, maladjustment. Too many American observers have assumed the largely popular Asian attitude towards their country to be one of strange and sullen dislike. They remember the generous help given by their Government to many Asian nations in distress. They see no rewarding signs of acknowledgment. They therefore infer that, deep in the fathomless Asian heart, some mystical distrust lurks. This accounts for the somber findings of some recent American travelers. When charitably disposed, they ascribe this attitude to that ambivalence which, they feel, is an essential quality of the Asian temper. Otherwise, they regard it as just ingratitude, either plain or masked in some fuzziness. But the truth perhaps escapes them. The basic Asian attitude is certainly not of mistrust. It is probably not even of dissatisfaction. On the whole, it connotes nothing more than a coolness of response, an absence of rapport.

Maybe the mistake lies in trying to diagnose the Asian psychology merely from its symptoms in politics. If there is some such thing as an Asian mind, politics is only its outer skin. And in respect to its attitude to America, as in every other, its impulse and indifference can only be discovered in strata deeper than politics. Its orientations are not to be identified with its political posturings, they are prior to them. Indeed, the lack of concern which faces us is a human state of mind caused by certain human factors. Since it pertains primarily to the cultural sphere, it may be called an intellectual attitude, but, if we describe it so, it is not meant that it is confined to intellectuals alone. It percolates down to the masses. These masses of Asia may not possess the gifts of articula-

tion or analysis Nevertheless, they drink avidly what silently seeps through to them

The human factors responsible for this Asian unconcern with much that America has come to stand for deserve to be examined patiently First of all, there is the facet of America which literate Asians mostly know and which eclipses the other they ought to know. At a modest newsstand in Karachi or Bagdad, Bombay or Singapore, you may not obtain a copy of *The Atlantic* or *Harper's* but you will definitely get *Glamor Girls* or *Flirt* or *Wink* It is not Princeton or Yale, it is Hollywood and Broadway that the Asian gets familiar with, that nudge and tickle his fancy and invite his attention The result is an appalling loss of perspective which nothing at present serves to restore True, the American centers of information exist and some of their pamphlets and documentaries may be effective enough But can they impinge upon one's consciousness as deeply as Technicolor musicals can? A large volume of American exports consists of cars and cosmetics The junior Indian or Pakistani official sees the American movies and reads the cheaper American magazines, his boss and the landlord ride in American cars The impression of both, the inchoate image, is that of an America which is incredibly rich, which is jam-packed with machines and pulchritude, which is, as it were, removed from reality, and therefore remote It is not the impression of a striving, straining people, a people who can share the Asian experience by empathy and who can possibly help in solving the problems that Asia is grappling with

The second factor is the heterogeneousness of the American culture or cultures It is possible that what lies here is only a kind of diversity, and diversity is a source of infinite promise in a civilization But the Asian is not so situated as to look upon it in that light He regards it as something self-contradictory It darkens his vision of America The differences he marks are not just those which are lingual or regional The babel of Times Square, the different atmospheres, the way of life which—as an American has said—is really forty-eight ways of life such contrasts cannot repel a man, far less an Asian In fact, they humanize the spectacle But the contradictions against which the Asian bumps are those which he believes to be basic, which he regards as cleavages in the American mind The emphasis on family enjoyments and the divorce rate, the appeal of the Christian church and the emergence of many religious fads, the instinct of isolationism and the acceptance of international responsibility, the Bill of Rights and the color bar the examples are random and may not be intelligible to the American reader But the disparities they reveal are startling to the distant observer, and the integrity of American culture is thereby lost to him

But consistency, it may be said, is the hobgoblin of foolish nations. It emaciates a people's life, and which dominant power in history ever showed an absolute measure of it? Britain did not have it, nor the Arabs, nor Rome, nor even Byzantium. Then why America? The question is pertinent and leads one to the primary reason of America's inability to make that impact upon the minds of other peoples, to achieve that clarity, which some earlier cultures did. It is an obvious reason. America is the first world power in history which is shouldering a world responsibility (the phrase "world leadership" is rightly distasteful) without running a world empire. Her relations with other nations are still predominantly commercial, and these are bedeviled by the perennial dollar gap. Now, I am no believer of empires, I come from a land which was ravaged by imperialism. But a fact must still be admitted. Though never ethically valid, empires have historically proved to be the surest vehicles for the projection of a culture. They clarify. They emphasize. They peel off the rind from the core. They bring out the essence by strangely dissolving the contradictions which may otherwise warp a nation's way of life.

It is significant that many responsible Westerners have found Britain to be still the most popular Occidental nation in South Asia. Perhaps "popular" is not quite the word, but it is true that the people who impress the Asians most are the British, even now. Maybe it is the wider range of the British mind, maybe it is their more flexible international attitudes. But the background here is purely historical. Britain governed an empire in Asia. This naturally deepened her contacts, enlarged her awareness, brought her into an intimate relationship with diverse cultures and made her civilization penetrate into them. This process was culturally most fertile. It isolated a dominant note from the jangle of British civilization, the integrity of her politics and the sanctity of her judicial system became outstanding institutions in the eyes of the world. The consequences are visible today. India and Pakistan, for example, have thrown away the British bathwater, but they cherish the baby. They admire the British constitution and seek to emulate it. Likewise, despite France's decline, the shades of her culture still linger over much of the Middle East. No uprising in revolt, no emancipation of the subject peoples can entirely obliterate the long acting effects of the mental encounters which imperialism brings about. In that it chokes the liberating message of a native culture, imperialism is an incubus. But in that it gives it depth and sensitivity, it is also an indubitable advantage.

America lacks it altogether. And it is an advantage which she cannot, and does not, seek. For, despite interruptions, a new international order is completing itself in Asia and Africa today. Colonialism is now as much

a thing of the past as it is alien to the American instinct. In this context America's burden is different from, but heavier than, the notorious one that the white man bore. She does not wish to boss over others. Yet she has to drive home to them the essence of her message. She has to make tangible the objective correlatives of her influence over the world. The Marshall Plan, the Point Four program, the food gifts to India and Pakistan—all were unselfish acts. They proved America's wealth and demonstrated her altruism. But they did not delineate her essential character. America's problem, in fact, is to find a just substitute for the unjust expedients of imperialism.

Has this substitute not presented itself in her technological leadership of the non-Communist world and also in her unceasing espousal of the values of democracy? The answer, if candid, can only be an unconcealed "no." And in considering the reasons for it we come to two more complex factors that determine Asia's current attitude. The fact is not that Asia abhors materialism and, therefore, dreads technology. The fact is that technology is a poor instrument of propagation and may, over a short term, be culturally pointless. Machines are useful but they lack a human tongue. They cannot encompass another people's life. They cannot make upon it the impress which is originally designed. And, in this connection, the fact is inescapable that, in present Asian societies, what technical aid America gives them gets harnessed to the advantage of the capitalists. Along with exporting machines and technical advice, America needs to export the social know-how which she has herself employed in their use. Not many in Asia are aware of the actual sinews of American life. The techniques of participation, the dispersion of ownership, the wide social range covered by capital formation, the relative harmony of labor management relations, the fluidity of social or economic class—these phenomena constitute the human framework within which American machines play their part. And this framework is curiously closed to the Asian's eye.

Unfortunately, the current war of ideologies has completely distorted the social issues which Asia confronts. By polarizing human society into Right and Left, by dividing it into the crude extremes of black and white, it has blotted out many nuances of social thought and obscured many shades of gray. In the present situation, Asians are not commonly encouraged to perceive that the type of capitalism under which America operates is not the type which menaces them, that it is not the capitalism for which Marx predicted a sure collapse. What they understand by this term is still the landlord with his hoarded wealth, the profiteer, the status quo with its many iniquities. They hear the word approvingly used by Americans. They hear derisive talk of "creeping socialism." They

conclude that injustice is thereby condoned and progress is sought to be blocked. The conclusion is false, the misunderstanding is tragic, but the reason is no more than a confusion of the two different senses in which these terms, "capitalism" and "socialism," are employed on the one side and construed on the other.

This point may well be the crux of the whole issue, any ambiguity about it is highly dangerous. The Asian must be shown that America does not seek to preclude the redistributive economic measures which are a sore need of the Orient and without which no growth of its energies is possible. The real nature of the American society deserves to be expressed. It deserves to be blazoned to the eye of the world. But it cannot be expressed unless sufficient stress is put on America's own ingrained attachment to social justice which she has realized herself, though not through the means the Communists would prescribe. This demands not only a change of terms but also a rejection of clichés. It demands a shift of emphasis from the antithesis of economic collectivism and free enterprise (which, to the gasping Asian, is meaningless) to the actuality of the American economy and the social system founded upon it. If these represent an ideology, the meaning of that ideology need not only be expressed in the context of the Communist non Communist clash. Its concepts should be released from the tensions of this conflict. They should be made independent of it. They should exceed it. In brief, Americanism should appear to exist in its own right and not as something other than Communism. Given this reinterpretation of America, the Asian would look to it in a state of mind, relaxed and unobsessed, in which his receptivity would not be blocked. For even though he bears attachment to the values of liberty and tolerance, he does not absorb the exact historical experience of the present times, the experience of choice between freedom and regimentation. It is an experience of strain, and his spirit hungers for repose. This hunger needs to be assuaged.

How often has it been said that the American will not explain his philosophy? How often has it been suspected that he does not have any? There exists considerable literature about the civilization of the United States, but a study of American thought which brings out its sane and sunny qualities, the balance in its approach and the humanity of its appeal, will probably still be found to come from the pen of a non-American—a Lin Yutang, for example. Such rare expositions apart, the Asian's idea of America is formed by movies, by the talk about vacuum cleaners and shiny automobiles, and by the brilliant animadversions of some European intellectuals. He is disposed to regard America as either 'the enormous, abstract something' which an American, John Gunther, has called it or just a crazy offshoot of Western civilization. In the first case, it baffles him. In the second, it annoys him. He is vexed with Western civilization

and he is vexed all the more with its self-confidence, which is precisely what he believes America represents. The serene optimism of the Founding Fathers, the rationalism of the American Proposition, the non-personal automatism of a drop the coin in the slot civilization—all these symbolize to him a brave-new-world mood, an intolerable complacency. All these accord ill with his tortured mind, his sense of the disorder of the day.

This consciousness of disorder cannot be suppressed, it is to be released and enlarged. It can be enlarged by a more sensitive interpretation of the Proposition itself. It is true that the idea on which the Proposition is based bears no scars of mental conflict, it is a kind of idea, with only an intellectual appeal, and an idea which can raise no storms and generate no enthusiasms. Yet it is an idea which is capable of being redefined, in terms appropriate alike to the modern age and the Asian mind. If it is rationalist, its rationalism does not deny the subtler truths which Marx or Freud may have vouchsafed to us, and it is not incommensurate with the classical wisdoms of the East. But to represent it in this light, America has to reorient herself intellectually to the East. She has to represent a new civilization.

A new civilization? Particularly when America speaks the European tongues? When she embodies no culture distinct from that of the countries from which her population has derived? The common supposition is that, on the basis of its genesis, America will remain a continuation of Europe only. But it is doubtful if, in the whole field of history, we come across any two civilizations which succeeded each other and yet were entirely discontinuous. It is the whole, the *gestalt*, into which the various components merge that matters. If it is new, it puts the stamp of originality on the civilization which thus evolves. From this point of view, the interpretation suggested above is surely not unwarranted.

It is not a radically new thesis that the remarks made here attempt to present. The problem is not academic but practical, and original theories would hardly be relevant or useful just now. In the present state of intercultural contacts, the contradictions in America become exposed and the real content of its social system remains concealed. The resultant problems cannot be solved by prescribing panaceas. Some remedial measures may indeed be obvious. It is possible that more American travel in Asia will help. Perhaps a greater export of intellectual commodities is feasible. Perhaps a change of tone is necessary in both appeal and admonition. Surely, academic devices can be forged for freeing American thought from its "West European centredness." Surely, more American private investment in Asia will establish more intimate contacts. But none of these things, by itself, will break much new ground. The desideratum of the whole situation is to stimulate a new understanding. Its basis will



not be supplied by presenting America partially or piecemeal or in capsules, but by reinterpreting it as a whole. And this understanding is not needed by the Asia of Syngman Rhee or Mao Tse Tung. It is needed by the vast masses of that continent, elusive but susceptible, indifferent but questioning, on whom the brunt of many future decisions may lie.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 To what factor does Buch attribute the "lack of perspective" which he says Asians have toward America?
- 2 What contradictions in American life does Buch believe are responsible for a lack of sympathetic understanding by Asians?
- 3 What disadvantages in Asian understanding does he think we have suffered because we were not a colonial or imperial nation?
- 4 Why does he believe that American technological leadership is as such of small value to us in Asia?
- 5 What is the Asian misapprehension which he says exists regarding capitalism? How does he suggest we should clear up this misunderstanding?
- 6 By what specific means has Buch made clear what he calls "The Dividing Gulf"?
- 7 What device is used by Buch to give coherence to his discussion of possible reasons for Asia's failure to understand America?
- 8 Analyze the fifth paragraph of the essay. State the topic sentence and show in detail how it is developed in this paragraph.
- 9 Comment on the average length of the paragraphs in this essay. What does it indicate about the type of reader for whom the essay is intended?
- 10 Show how the last paragraph summarizes the principal ideas of the essay and emphasizes their significance.

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Buch says that a new understanding of America is needed in Asia. By what specific means do you think it can be brought about?
- 2 Is there any feasible or desirable way to reduce the export of those things which give Asiatics an unfortunate idea of America?
- 3 What policies of foreign trade do you think would help improve the Asiatic attitude toward America?
- 4 Do you think that the problem of gaining prestige for the West in Asia is to be solved primarily by material aid, or by some other means?

#### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 How America can prove its good intentions in Asia.
- 2 Living up to world responsibility.
- 3 The average American's idea of Asia.
- 4 What an individual can do to help toward Asiatic understanding of America.

## HARRY D. GIDEONSE

born 1901, after studying at Columbia and the University of Geneva, taught economics at Columbia Barnard Rutgers, and the University of Chicago He was Chairman of the Department of Economics and Sociology at Barnard and has been President of Brooklyn College since 1939 Among his writings are *The Higher Learning in a Democracy* and *Organized Scarcity and Public Policy* [From *Harper's Magazine*, June, 1954, reprinted by permission of the author]

### *An Unsentimental Look at India*

"It looks different from New Delhi" is the standard comment with which Prime Minister Pandit Nehru greets Western visitors. Indeed it does. The gap between India and America is growing fast—and nearly all Indians, plus a good many sentimental Americans, put the blame entirely on the United States. They accuse us of failure to "understand the Eastern mind", and they often talk a good deal about the "spiritual qualities" of the Orient and the noble character of Nehru. Rarely is there any hint that Indians might fail to understand America, or to appreciate the spiritual qualities of the West.

When I returned recently from ten strenuous weeks in India, I was convinced that misunderstanding is by no means a one-way street. As I visited universities, research institutions, and government agencies, I found myself under the constant provocation of challenging argument, misinformation, inverted racism—and a searching curiosity about America. Since I was a private visitor, with no official responsibilities, I could afford to give frank answers, which often collided head-on with the established stereotypes of Indian thought.

For example, the audiences at my lectures were always startled when I reminded them that America had been drawn into World War II because an Asiatic power had attacked us. They have swallowed so much anticolonial propaganda, which invariably casts "Europeans" in the role of aggressors, that they could hardly credit the fact of Pearl Harbor. (A minor, but curious, item of misunderstanding is the way in which Indians normally use the term "European" for all Westerners, including Americans, but it does not seem to include the Russians.) Moreover, when I pointed out the reason for Japan's attack—the fact that America was the only consistent defender of China against Japanese aggression—my listeners often seemed to feel that I was inventing a debater's argument. The historical truth simply did not fit their preconceptions.

word is related to the liberation of the self from material or physical needs, and it is obviously almost the exact opposite of our conception of freedom as the presence of choice. Choice is clearly rooted in desire—or, at least, in interest.

In succeeding versions of the same lecture, I found common ground by discussing the Henry David Thoreau part of our tradition. I also stressed the difficulties which India was encountering in its economic development plans, because higher standards of living, industrialization, and capital investment are all based on moral principles which are the opposite of the traditional Hindu ideal of renunciation.

But our traditional American stress on "freedom," as related to the economic phases of the "American way," almost certainly misses fire in India. The attempt to appeal to Indians by using the psychological assumptions of a modern American advertising agency frequently clashes with the classical Indian conception of freedom which regards the satisfying of material wants—including sanitation—as essentially "busy work."

And this conflict in basic motives—the desire for increased productivity, on the one hand, and the admiration for religious renunciation on the other—is the deepest and the most tragic dilemma facing the leaders of modern India. There are a few Indian intellectuals who are giving careful attention to the problem of restating India's cultural and spiritual traditions in a manner compatible with India's material needs. Moreover, Nehru's ambivalent and obsolete position on these issues is widely criticized within the Congress party. But usually the gap is filled with "leftist" slogans which beg the moral question, while they suggest that material productivity is largely a question of scientific magic. This fashionable "leftist thinking" also implies that capital development will fall from the skies like manna, rather than grow from concerted productive effort.

### THE TROUBLE OF MANY TONGUES

Language is not only a major problem in the communication between India and the West. It is also perhaps the greatest single challenge to the unity of India itself. Almost all Indian colleges and universities teach in English, and common knowledge of English was one of the most important forces in developing a national point of view. Today—and this is surely a paradox of Indian "nationalism"—a major consequence of independence is to weaken the hold of English. At the same time, the regional languages—there are about ten important ones—are becoming the vehicles of local political movements which threaten to split up the country. The establishment of the state of Andhra—breaking away from Madras—during the fall of 1953 was merely one example,

students nor the faculty—encourages a form of fiscal exploitation. Rejection of 70 per cent of the candidates for degrees becomes a vested interest of higher academic authorities, because examination fees have become indispensable to college finances. The Congress party, which used college students in its own struggle against the British, now finds it hard to cope with Communist enemies who use its own favorite weapon. I met many educational administrators who seemed resigned to defeat by the conflicting pressures—from government on the one hand, and their own faculty and students on the other.

Two Indian universities were closed during my visit, as a direct result of Communist agitation. At one of them I arrived on the day of the closing. The local administrator was obviously unprepared for the entertainment of a foreign visitor under the circumstances. As we talked about the events of the day, I asked him to translate one of the student leaflets that had been distributed at the college gate that morning. He was astonished when I correctly guessed the contents of the third paragraph, after he had translated the first two for me. When I told him I had seen similar literature in Brooklyn more than a dozen years ago, it seemed to open a novel perspective. Few people in India realized that they are dealing with a world-wide phenomenon—local issues and the limited horizon of their previous colonial experience have obscured the similarity of the pattern. From then on, our conversation ran in terms of Communist techniques as an international conspiracy, and our experiences in the United States suddenly seemed full of significance in Uttar Pradesh.

Indian intellectual life in general is deeply influenced by a rather simple "leftism," and leading Fabian Socialists of thirty years ago are often cited as the spokesmen of the Western tradition. Indians know little of the economic thought of today, whether British or American. To them the period of the Webbs and of Harold Laski is still the present. These people favored Indian independence, and so Harold Laski is still a name to swear by. The most widely-read Western journal is the *London New Statesman and Nation*, which is notoriously and continuously anti-American. Nehru is one of its constant readers, and he speaks of Kingsley Martin, the editor, as a "statesman."

There is an amazing contrast between what is written about India and what is said by Indian intellectuals. The literature stresses Indian interest in spiritual matters. Actually I found very little interest in such problems among intellectuals—although there is more of it in the villages and among the non-Westernized groups. Many intellectuals are both ignorant and contemptuous of their cultural heritage. The moral presuppositions of Western freedom are ignored, and a facile verbalism takes its place—especially when the leading spokesmen for the West seem to present

their own case in terms of the economic by-products of a free society, and often ignore its cultural foundations

India is a big country, and the variations between, say, the Bombay area and Calcutta are as great as those between Arizona and Maine. From an American standpoint, Bombay is "friendly" territory—while the Calcutta area is not only "unfriendly" to the United States but is a serious problem to the governing Congress party (which in this area is manifestly "friendly" to American visitors). Bombay is better housed and its school and administrative facilities are more adequate. There is a sense of more intimate participation in world affairs, and an American visitor does not encounter the barrage of critical questions that is his common experience in, say, Calcutta.

But in India as a whole the stunning impact of misery and poverty must be felt to be appreciated. A million refugees from Pakistan live in the streets of Calcutta, a quarter of them suffer from tuberculosis. An American car parked in the street in many parts of India is soon surrounded by dramatic illustrations of human misery awaiting the return of its passenger—lepers, people with stumps of arms, sufferers from loathsome eye diseases and elephantiasis.

#### A NATION OF VILLAGES

Even so, the urban population is much better off than the rural—although I hasten to add that an American visitor in the village typically finds a friendly reception. There is a myth about us in the villages—the myth of generosity and the magic of science and technology. I had been told of the shy and almost invisible women of India, but my experience in one stop by the roadside after another revealed a hearty hospitality. (The women's radiant smiles usually showed magnificent white teeth, which should offer a research challenge to the dental profession, considering the incredibly inadequate and monotonous diet of the villagers.) But the housing and the sanitation must be seen to be believed—and the primitive tools point to a cause of Indian poverty that must go back centuries beyond the rule of the British.

The present Indian government is concentrating on agricultural development. The politically vocal segment of the population is in the cities, and it clamors for urban development in practically every newspaper, but the Congress party has had the courage to resist this pressure, spending most of its talent and limited resources on rebuilding the rural community. This clearly makes sense, because 90 per cent of the people live in the villages, and food is the most urgent problem for the whole nation.

The government's Five-Year Plan, therefore, calls first of all for the reconstruction of agriculture, even its industrial chapters are directly related to the increase in farm output. This Plan calls for nothing that

hasn't already been tried in the long history of American agricultural development, and our aid program is geared directly into the Indian government's farm plan

The fulfillment of the plan seems to be in excellent shape, but the objectives are relatively modest. The primary hurdle is the scarcity of capital, which must come either from foreign sources, or from the Indian people themselves. To secure the capital from the Indian people, by the Russian technique of paying them less and charging them more, would require a ruthlessly autocratic government. Instead, the plan is committed to the democratic method of raising capital from voluntary savings and direct taxation. It is disheartening, however, to study the modest figures and discover that even if the plan is totally successful, the actual gain in income per capita over the five-year period will be very slight, because the annual increase in Indian population—between five and six million a year—will make it necessary to provide for some thirty million additional mouths.

### THE WRONG KIND OF EDUCATION

Population is the basic Indian problem—and the chances of getting it under control are hardly promising, in the light of traditional attitudes and standards of living. But the inadequacy of education is a major secondary problem. Unemployment of college graduates is serious throughout India, creating unparalleled opportunities for party-line recruitment.

There has been a pathetic misdirection of educational effort in the past, which persists in spite of a shelf of government reports which unerringly diagnose the basic malady: everyone wants a white-collar education for a white collar job—and there are not enough white-collar jobs—while no one seems to want an education that is deliberately designed to meet actual needs in agriculture, technology, sanitation, and education.

There are some splendid exceptions here and there—agricultural colleges, engineering schools, teacher-training colleges. But the overwhelming majority of Indian colleges and universities are grinding out a poor copy of English liberal arts education of the time of Macaulay, which was transplanted to India in 1835 to give England a clerical and administrative service, "a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in faith, in opinion, in morals, and in intellect" (to use Macaulay's own language in his classic *Minute on Indian Education*). The result today is a mongrel product, trained to be verbally proficient in studies for which there is little use, and disdainful of (or at best uninterested in) the type of training that would fit the everyday needs of India.

It is popular to blame the British for a poor start, but the malady is

more deeply rooted than rhetoric may suggest (There has been no hesitation in rejecting other cultural imports of the British ) In this case, too, the basic difficulty seems to be an incompatibility between Indian attitudes toward labor and material productivity on the one hand, and a vague general desire for the fruits of material productivity on the other There is much talk of freedom and technology in India, but there is very little awareness that the material well being of the West is largely a by-product of Western spiritual and moral ideals, plus a positive attitude toward work The educated Indian commonly considers manual labor—or even a foreman's job in a factory—as beneath his dignity

Eleanor Roosevelt tells in her latest book, *India and the Awakening East*, of a conversation with Nehru in which she asked whether it would be possible to link India's spiritual faith in renunciation with the desire for material improvement Where—she asked—would India get the incentives for the hard work that would be required for the betterment of her living conditions? Nehru, and many Indians with him, think of spiritual values as one thing—and of material progress as another They have read Tawney with the other Fabian Socialists, but they have missed the essential lesson of the interdependence of moral attitudes and material progress Or—as Mrs Roosevelt politely summarizes it—"the discussion was inconclusive, and Nehru gave me no feeling that I was wrong"

This is precisely the moral vacuum which Communist propaganda is endeavoring to fill

The gap between moral preachment and actual practice is perhaps the common denominator of all my observations It ranges from the theoretical respect for all forms of life, which leads to shocking cruelty to animals in actual practice, to the disparity in educational objectives and achievements which I have just mentioned It is most glaringly obvious, however, in Indian discussions of foreign policy

#### PREACHING VS PRACTICE

Theoretically—and economically—India is part of the free world," but no one who reads the Indian press would think for a moment that her real sympathies or interests are with the West Almost every day someone repeats Nehru's dogmatic statement that colonialism is worse than communism—and Americans are regarded as one of the colonial powers," when we are not singled out as the leading imperialist power Mr Dulles is the whipping boy of every editorial writer, in much the same spirit as those editorial writers in the United States who castigated Dean Acheson for his 'soft policy' toward Moscow while he was in fact initiating the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine, and the NATO pact

Every speech of Senator McCarthy is widely publicized, while news

items about new strategic railways from Communist China to the gates of India are minimized if they are published at all. Kashmir is discussed as if it were an American adventure in Indian imperialism. Incredible as it may seem to American readers, Indian editorial writers actually used the phrase, "the predatory Mr. Stevenson," when they accused him of a fantastic plot to interfere in Kashmir as an "agent" of the Eisenhower Administration.

Nehru's government voted in the United Nations to brand North Korea as an "aggressor." Yet when Nehru addressed the Indian troops assigned to administer the Korean armistice, he stressed—and it was widely publicized in India—that they should remember that India was "a friend to both sides." Indians still picture themselves as "moral leaders," apparently undisturbed by the wide gap between their pronouncements on the one hand and their actual conduct in Kashmir or Korea on the other.

Perhaps the best pragmatic conclusion we can draw is that we should never hesitate to give India clearly defined responsibilities so that—as in Korea where the Indian troops were responsible for practice rather than preachment—they might "learn what they live."

It was amusing to me to witness the unsettlement of the established line of criticism against the supposedly "anti Asiatic" United States, when I suggested that China had originally been put on the UN Security Council because America recognized the importance of having a permanent Asiatic seat there. I usually added that eventually, and after suitable guarantees of compliance with the United Nations Charter, Communist as well as Formosan China might be given membership in the Assembly—and that India might then receive the permanent seat in the Security Council. I presented this as the personal suggestion of a private student of international relations—but it led to categorical and official denials of Indian interest in such an idea, which would clearly focus responsibility *and help to expose some of the empty moral preachment in which New Delhi now habitually indulges itself*.

Incidentally, such a policy would help to make clear our real interest in the strength and responsibility of independent India—and, by focusing attention on responsibility, I think it would improve our position in India, whether or not it eventually was accepted.

We are not waging a winning battle in India. Even during my ten weeks there, we were noticeably *losing ground*, and the *image of China* was forever in my mind. The causes are deeply anchored in the cultural history and domestic politics of India itself, as well as in some of the hardest facts of world politics.

But the battle is not lost. There are large potential resources on the side of freedom in India. They are particularly numerous in the villages,



among the senior civil servants, and in the varied interests of India's economic life which are closely interwoven with the West

There is also great potential strength inside the Congress party itself, and in the confused but dynamic leadership of the Socialist party—which is far more critical of Soviet objectives than Nehru is

The ideological no-man's land between Gandhi's disciples on the one hand and the Communist party on the other is currently filled by strange hybrids, ranging from fanatical Hinduism of the type that led to the assassination of Gandhi to extreme forms of nineteenth century rationalism, from Vedantic communism to the Fabianism of leaders like Nehru whose chief quarrel with the Socialists is their unwillingness to accept his soft foreign policy toward the Soviet Union. Almost anything can still be expected to emerge from the present fluidity of political forces

I have great faith, however, that responsible participation in political decisions—such as India's military role in the Korean armistice—will throw the ultimate decision to the side of freedom. This is certainly not the time to restrict our cultural and exchange programs in India—or to reduce our economic help

The deep tendency of Indians to confuse the slogans of Communist propaganda with the idea of anti-colonial "nationalism" is a challenge to American political intelligence. American observers frequently make the mistake of confusing Nehru with the Indian nation. Nehru's intellectual and political position is "dated"—it is a viewpoint rooted in the Laski-Benes period. Even India's Socialists are more concerned with the modern problems of freedom than the veteran Nationalist leader whose views were crystallized by his life-long struggle against "colonialism." Whatever may have been the case in the past, support of Nehru is not necessarily identical, today, with a policy of support for a strong and independent India

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What according to Gideonse causes the difference in viewpoint between Washington and New Delhi?
- 2 Explain the difference between the Indian and the Western ideas of freedom.
- 3 What serious problem is raised by the Indian emphasis on renunciation?
- 4 Explain the problems raised by the language situation in India.
- 5 In what sense is population the basic Indian problem?
- 6 What does Gideonse believe is wrong with Indian education?
- 7 What is the effect of the author's use of Nehru's remark as the opening sentence? What use does Gideonse make of it in introducing the reader to his point of view?

- 8 In what ways does Gideonse's use of personal experience add force to the presentation of his ideas?
- 9 Analyze the fifth paragraph of the essay. What is its function in the essay and how does it fulfill this function?
- 10 What other paragraphs do you find in the essay which perform the same function as the fifth?
- 11 The essay is divided into six large parts, the first of which is untitled. Upon what principle is this division based? What is the purpose of the first section?
- 12 What is the effect of putting "Preaching vs. Practice" last in the essay? Has Gideonse indicated any reason for placing it last?

## FOR DISCUSSION

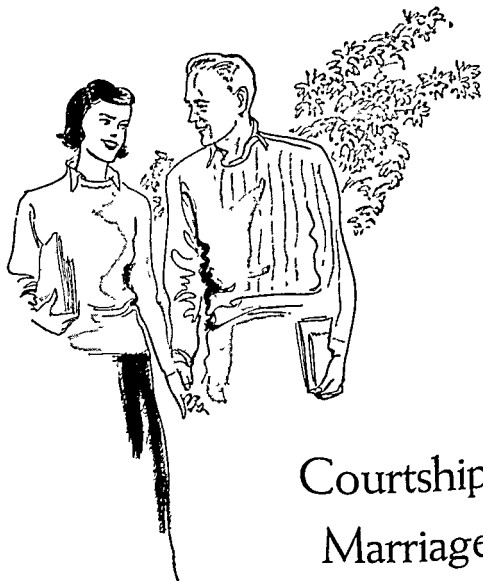
- 1 To what extent does the United States have a duty to make our aims and ideals intelligible to India? To what extent does India have a corresponding responsibility to the United States?
- 2 What aspects of American life tend to hinder mutual understanding between the United States and India? What should be done about them?
- 3 In what specific ways can India be assisted to understand the United States?
- 4 Explain the role which communication plays in international understanding.
- 5 Why is sentimentality a danger in international affairs?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 The United States needs a spiritual rebirth
- 2 The role of the United Nations in international understanding
- 3 The individual's contribution to international understanding.
- 4 Education for a citizen of the world
- 5 Travel as a force for international understanding
- 6 An unsentimental look at the United States

## PART IV: *On Maturity*

### *Chapter Twelve*



# Courtship, Marriage, and the Family

MARRIAGE IS A THING

YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE YOUR WHOLE MIND TO

IBSEN

## Introduction

New books on love and marriage, the family, divorce, the psychology of sex, and kindred subjects are coming from the presses in profusion. They testify to an intense and widespread interest in these subjects, and suggest also that modern civilization has not as yet provided a stable framework of custom in these matters—that a great many people are disturbed about them and are seeking happier modes of conducting their lives.

Two important reflections are likely to arise if one surveys much of this material: first, that the majority of the books on the subject have much the same thing to say, and second that the problems are by no means fully solved, but will have to await the efforts of particularly deep and penetrating thinkers. In short, progress is slower than the flow of writing on the subject might suggest. Success in further attack on the problems will undoubtedly be achieved only through very basic insights in a number of fields—not only psychology and sociology, but also philosophy, medical science, and subdivisions and cross related fields including psychiatry, psychosomatic medicine, ethics, theology, ‘human relations,’ anthropology, and others—a group of subjects concerned with people and their inner lives, with man’s behavior toward man, and with his place in the universe. The insights of the story-writer, novelist, and the playwright will also be of importance in reaching solutions to many of the problems connected with the family.

Already much has been accomplished, but apparently far more remains to be done. It would be inappropriate here to try to present samples of the most advanced thinking in the field of the relationships of men and women, because at present the problems are being approached from confusingly diverse points of view. What can be profitably offered, however, is some samples of lively discussion and explanation, particularly in those areas most likely to touch the readers of this book closely.

Kurt Sontheimer’s ‘The Dating Pattern’ is the work of a young German student of sociology who spent a year in this country and was able as an objective observer to comment on American college life from the inside. He took advantage of the fact that his background was

quite different from an American student's, so that he could see significance in many kinds of behavior which an American would not notice particularly because of their familiarity

Allan Fromme's "Love and Marriage" is his own summing up of current ideas in a highly important aspect of marriage daily living Dr Fromme deals with the ideas, dreams, and feelings of the average person, and shows their bearing on success or failure in marriage, thus providing a guide for the married life of almost everyone

David R Mace, Professor of Human Relations at Drew University, after a wide experience in marriage counseling in both Great Britain and America, reached the conclusion that professional marriage counselors, now rather few in number, offer a service that is indispensable to a very large number of couples whose happiness in marriage is threatened by forces they cannot themselves fully understand or control "The Case for Marriage Counseling" describes the typical threatened marriage and tells why he thinks the marriage counselor is the person best qualified to avert the danger

Dr John Levy, a psychiatrist, aided by his wife, Ruth Munroe, wrote "All Children Have Difficulties" as part of a book entitled *The Happy Family* It was published in 1938, and caused a good deal of controversy It may still do so The authors interpreted psychiatric data on children as showing that expressions of love toward children in a family were not enough that a child has a genuine need for "aggression" from its parents In the old days, this was usually supplied by sternly administered "discipline," but discipline became rather unfashionable some years ago Now, apparently, it has been rediscovered that too much leniency toward a child is bad for the child, less because he may grow up a terror to the community than because his need for some form of punishment when he feels guilty is frustrated by a sort of false kindness from his parents At any rate, so the theory goes

The various samples of advice on marriage and family relations presented here touch on only a few of the aspects of the subject as a whole But if you read and think about them carefully you cannot fail to become interested in a field of knowledge that is of great importance for everyone who seeks a happy maturity

## KURT SONTHEIMER

*born 1928 a former graduate student at the University of Kansas has now returned to his native Germany [By permission of the author]*

### *The Dating Pattern*

"What is dating like in your country?" was the first question put to me, a European exchange student, when I was the guest of a college Y W C A group. To the great surprise of the girls I answered that there was neither a corresponding term in my native language nor anything in my country similar to America's institutionalized relationships between young men and women. Indeed, the institution of dating—and it has really all the characteristics of an institution—seems to be uniquely American. Americans are not a little proud of it. Although the practice of dating begins with early adolescence, there is strong support for the view that the greatest refinement and elaboration of the pattern is reached in the college years.

Rarely is there a greater contrast than that between the intellectual activities in a college and the practice of dating. On their dates the majority of the students conceal whatever education they may have acquired. The institution of dating seems to make no allowance for the display of attitudes characteristic of the educated person.

Most pamphlets and books about college life and the right behavior in college stress that what goes on in the classroom is the most important part of education, but they also—invariably, it seems—give standardized encouragements to profit from the social life in college, to meet frequently with the other sex, to learn how to get along with other people, to "win friends and influence people." Apparently these suggestions about social life are much the more faithfully followed. Attending classes is by many students regarded simply as a necessity, the real fun and worth one gets out of college is the social life it provides. It is almost beyond one's imagination to think of a campus in which social life does not play an important part. To the majority of the students there would be almost no point in "getting an education" at such an institution.

There is much studying in American colleges, to be sure, but it is not very often enjoyed. So quite naturally social life is pursued for its enjoyment, so strenuously that relatively little enthusiasm is left for studying and learning. All potentiality of enjoyment seems to be channeled towards the game of dating and other forms of sociability on a campus. Playing the game of dating in its very elaborate form is for

most players incompatible with developing the features of the educated man. Thus social life eventually takes a leading position quite disproportionate to the moderate suggestions of some educators. Some typical statements of this nature follow. Says a Dean of Women:

Dating is one of the happy phases of school life in a coeducational institution. It is natural and right for young men and women of college age to love to be together. Never again perhaps will they have the opportunity to compare and choose friendships on a higher level than that of the college.

A Christian student magazine published an article on the "Desirability, Delights and Dangers of Dating" in which freshmen were addressed as follows:

Most of you will spend a considerable part of your spare time in the delightful pastime of dating. For most of you no urging will be needed, since at about the age of 16 young people begin to feel that one of the most exciting facts about the world in which they live is that the other sex is in it, too. Dating is desirable because one needs to know a number of the opposite sex in order to have enough experiences out of which to make a good choice of a mate. If in freshman and sophomore years you are able to enjoy all kinds of dates and to become friends with people from many different backgrounds and with diverse interests, you will find that by the end of the year your own horizon has expanded. Further you will have increased your ability to be at ease in different social situations. You will thereby have reached new heights of self adjustment.

This is, in a nutshell, the philosophy of dating. With such information in mind and enticing new vistas opened to him, the student goes out and explores the field. When a freshman enters a college he is usually very eager to get acquainted with college mores. He is anxious to avoid any social blunder in the new milieu. Developing an acceptable and successful dating behavior becomes one of his main concerns. Since dating is treated as one of the most significant occupations in college days, his adjustment to the prevailing pattern of dating is all the more eagerly pursued. Rather soon he learns the ritual of dating. This is clearly recommended in a guide on campus activities.

In addition to becoming acquainted with other students the new student should be helped to learn the social amenities of the campus so that he may avoid the embarrassment of unwittingly doing the wrong thing. If coking at the College Union is the thing to do, he must discover it. If one does not take out a girl to Blank's Restaurant, he should find this out before it is too late.

It is seldom "too late," for the eagerness with which the new student tries to do the proper thing overrules completely any desire to do as one pleases. So the students take their dates to the places where all the others



go This gives them the assurance that they are not doing anything wrong, and satisfies also the publicity requirements of dating

The emphasis on successful dating is an outgrowth of the American notion of success During their whole childhood, as Margaret Mead has shown, success is the yardstick with which the achievements of American children are measured This is also the case in dating The predilection for quantification furnishes us with the explanation of how success in dating can be determined It is very simple indeed success in dating is measured by the number of dates The more a person dates, the more his company is desired by other people The opportunity to "make the grade" in social life puts great emphasis on the competitive aspect of dating in college A boy or girl can always find some consolation in being much sought after as a date, even when intellectual performance in college is poor As a matter of fact, the girls who gain popularity and glory, and the boys whose names are whispered over the dining room tables of women's dormitories, can boast of higher campus prestige than the bookworms, who often have a tendency to apologize for being so interested in books As one critic puts it "The educators vie with one another in apologizing for intellect, they say These people aren't really bookworms They're just killing time until the movies open "

Being forced into the iron cage of the dating pattern, the partners can very seldom achieve that integration of social and intellectual graces which, in my judgment, is one of the earmarks of the truly educated person The need to be socially integrated seems to be much greater in American youth than the need to develop intellectual curiosity and a thirst for knowledge Hence the importance of dating and similar social activities The greater part of students' time is spent in classrooms and study rooms, but it seems as if many of them really come to life only when they sip their coke in the company of a pretty coed or a handsome male student

#### PRE COLLEGE DATING

The average American student has had many dates before coming to college Dating begins now as early as the sixth and seventh grades and reaches great importance in high school In present American high schools, where learning seems often only to be indulged in when it is fun, the importance of group activities of all kinds is obvious There most of the American youth get a more or less rich dating experience They are encouraged to do so, and the pressure to date is so strong that there are very few who still go their own ways

The difference between dating behavior in high school and college is very often only a matter of intensity In college, it seems, dating is pursued with a much greater earnestness, as if one's life depended on it

In high school dating is mostly a matter of pure enjoyment, in college, mainly among juniors and seniors, it becomes a matter of crucial importance, for which one has to harness all his energies and capacities. On the other hand high school students orient themselves to the college ideal, so that an ideal quality is attached to college practices. In a number of cases high-school sororities and other clubs try to outdo the colleges by having more glamorous parties and indulging in more conspicuous patterns of dating. But at the high school level there is not the desperate attempt to find husbands that we discern in most college girls, there is more "loafing," more "fooling around."

Extensive high-school dating experience is at any rate an important asset for life in college. Says a student paper

Naturally, if you have had some successful dating experience during the high school years, that practice will make it easier for you at the beginning of college

Those who, unfortunately, did not reach the stage of being at ease with the opposite sex have no reason to retreat, for college is a new beginning

Dating is a skill which can be learned. It is considered to be a very valuable skill, and college offers the most splendid opportunities for acquiring good social habits. Thus prepared, the freshmen enter the new arena, ready to comply with all the rules and resolved to play a good part in the exciting game of personalities. What are the rules and how do they play?

### THE PATTERN

Most of the students think of dating as the most interesting and worthwhile pastime in college. One sociologist says "Dating and earning money for dates will occupy the greater part of the leisure of the American boy from early adolescence until betrothal." Yet appreciation of dating varies among students. There are some who have dates every day—I heard a fraternity member boasting in the middle of a semester that he had had 36 dates so far with 27 different girls. The majority of the students confine their dating to Fridays and Saturdays. Many students feel a necessity to have at least one date over the weekend, and some of them develop feelings of inferiority if they do not live up to this minimum dating requirement. Though they may not always admit it, many of them would have liked to do so, but were unsuccessful in making a date, or had no money, etc.

There are a few students, however, who simply do not care for dates. I found a small number of them in the fraternity of my acquaintance. These young men expressed an aversion to dating, possibly because they

found themselves too unskillful in coping with the social pattern. At any rate they were dissatisfied. One student complained:

Since there is a ratio of three boys to one girl on this campus, the coeds get pampered, they want to be treated like queens. Whenever you go out with them they pay much less attention to you than to the people that are at the same place. They are like on a pedestal, so nice, so well-mannered, so made-up pretty that it seems as though you could not even touch some of them. To me most of the girls here are simply dull and boring, maybe just because they think so highly of themselves.

Said another fraternity member:

I do not date very much up here. I date a lot more in other parts of the country where the girls are more interesting to talk to. In addition, I do not like the idea of having to call up a girl three weeks in advance in order to get a date. I just don't see why I should.

But such an attitude is not the rule; most of the fraternity people do go on dates, and in some of the Greek organizations they are even forced to go out on dates as long as they are pledged. Dating is "a lot of fun" to the majority of the students. It is sometimes rather difficult to determine just what this fun is, but coming home from their dates they keep assuring the others how "great" their date was and how much fun they had. Only rarely will one admit that he had not enjoyed himself on a date.

Dating is correlated with prestige on a campus and has led to the fixing of a "dating and rating complex." In order to establish a ranking system with regard to success in dating, there must be a means by which successful achievement in this field can be measured. This is why the date is preferably public. The girl wants to be seen in the normally frequented places and so also does the boy who wants to be seen with a popular girl. Dating becomes in fact a kind of display; it is principally a relationship in which the individuality of the particular partner is not of primary importance to either. What is important is that the girl can demonstrate her great desirability as a date and the boy his ability to attract good-looking and popular girls.

It is interesting to note in this connection that for the most part the young men, when asked about the girls they take out, do not go out with Nancy or Mary, but with a Pi Phi or a Chi Omega or a Kappa. The same holds true for the girls when talking about their dates. The double use of the word "date" may also throw some light on the impersonal nature of the dating system. "Date" can have the meaning of social engagement, but can also designate the partner with whom the engagement is arranged. This transfer of meaning from the engagement itself to the partner in the engagement reflects very precisely the nature of the date.

"Date" has an impersonal element in its meaning, though it is nothing but the encounter of two persons. It means more than just meeting and being with another person. The other person is necessary for the execution of the date, but it is not so very important who fulfills this particular function. For many college girls it is seemingly more important to be on a date, especially if there is an important party, than to be out with a particular person. In their dating experience they rotate so much, always going with different people in order to remain in circulation, that they finally lose part of their sense of genuine discrimination between human beings. Yet the institutional character of dating compels them to go on in this direction. We call this pattern "institutional" because it is more or less fixed. The date has to proceed in a certain way. There may occasionally be individual variations and changes, but the idea of what a date should be is very much ingrained in the minds of the partners. This institutional quality is not found in Europe, where no particular pattern is consciously followed. In America the institutionalization is so thorough, indeed, that it is easy to trace the different steps involved in dating without danger of making seriously inaccurate generalizations.

The date begins, in a sense, with the telephone call. The boy is supposed to ask his prospective partner for a date. Though he may meet her in class or elsewhere, the telephone is in most cases resorted to as the means for transmitting the message. In many instances a "coke date" is arranged first. At the time of the small date the next big date is agreed upon. Without the use of the telephone a good deal of the present form of dating on a campus would probably be different. It would be much more difficult to reach all kinds of people with whom one wants to go out. For a great number of students it is probably easier to communicate a message on the telephone than face to face. Most girls who are concerned about their success in dating will not fix a dating time immediately, unless they know the boy rather well. In most cases they reply with one of the well established clichés: "Oh, I would love to go, Bill, but I am so busy right now. Why don't you call me later this week?" Bill, of course, will call her later, and if she cares for him she will give her consent.

This deferment of a definite arrangement is a trick of considerable importance in the girl's group. Since popularity is the ideal, and popularity itself is determined by one's desirability as a date, it is a clever device for getting many phone calls. In many houses the phone is in the hall, so that telephone popularity is clearly evident. It is regarded as wholly natural that the greatest number of calls made to an organized house of women come from the male students.

The telephone plays an important part in the average student's life apart from the arrangement of dates. It is expected that a boy will phone

the girl of his temporary preference very often. Even after having just come home from a date some couples get on the line for a further chat. These telephone conversations are rarely of a serious nature. The conversation does not differ from that of the date proper—little college experiences, chat about friends, or marriages and "pinnings." It is not unusual that other boys get on the line and talk with the girl (not even knowing her) at the other end, just for the fun of the change. Sometimes they sit for almost an hour at the telephone giving their "lines." Not seldom the biggest lines are tried out over the telephone.

Yet the date itself is still the important thing and all phone calls are made in expectation of other dates. Let us now see what happens on the typical college date.

Bill has promised Mary to take her dancing on Saturday night. He had asked her for that date two weeks ago and phoned her again yesterday. At seven-thirty Bill, after having taken a shower, puts on a new white shirt, his blue sweater and grey slacks, and drives up to Mary's sorority house. He rings the door bell. A girl opens and lets him in. Mary is notified but does not come down immediately, though she has been ready for a while (it took her almost two hours to dress for the occasion). Finally she turns up, a big smile on her lips, handing her coat to Bill, who helps her put it on. Then they leave the house and get into the car. Bill has a good car, and Mary prefers boys with good cars. They drive to a dancing place which is much frequented by the students, and they find, indeed, a lot of friends there. Mary loves to be among people. She goes around to greet her acquaintances and is proud to have so many of them. She is eager to be seen by most of the students present and leads Bill around to meet all her friends too. At length they sit down in a booth, drink beer and smoke and fill the vacant minutes with talk. Mary, of course, has a great number of stories to tell about her many friends, her experiences in the sorority house, the coming big party, and the parties she has been to recently. Bill seeks to be interesting by talking about football and the coming basketball season. He is himself a basketball player, and Mary prefers him as an athlete. He has a very tender look for Mary, and after a few initial dances they dance cheek to cheek, just walking on the floor, but liking the feeling of being so closely united.

There is a lot of bragging in the conversation of both, and a lot of flattery of a very common type. Mary likes very much to be flattered. She does not believe everything, but it gives her a feeling of security to get some praise, she knows that she is worthy of Bill's attention and affection.

For a long time they hold hands, and when closing hour is drawing near they decide to leave and get back into the car. Mary sits very close

to Bill as they drive home Bill shows off by driving fast with an air of nonchalance After their arrival at the sorority house they walk up to the porch, where they find a number of other couples under the neo-classic white pillars, closely united in a more or less fervent kind of kissing This is Bill's third date with Mary He knows he has a right to kiss her tonight, and Mary has given him ample encouragement to do so during the whole evening by being so sweet and nice to him The long-desired act finds its realization, and when the bell tolls as an indication that all embraces must end, Mary and all the other girls slip regretfully through the door while the boys get back to their cars and drive home or to another restaurant for some refreshment

Inside, the girls are eager to relate to each other their experiences, what they did during the date, how the date was, how well he kissed, and so on In the fraternities likewise, the boys talk about their dates, exchanging critical views about the girls they have been out with Very often some other fraternity members know the girls in question, so that a rather extensive exchange of views takes place

Thus both partners are talked about, the boy by the girls and the girl by the boys In this way the public aspect of dating is enhanced by gossiping, so that those students who did not happen to be at the same time learn what went on With these observations in mind, it is not hard to understand why dating has not only an enjoyable side, but also an anxious side, especially for the girl Since the system is based on the artificiality of having a "line," and since each partner wants to win, of being a success, there can be a great deal of emotional strain The girl never knows for sure how well one is liked, how convincingly one is playing his role, or what the house gossip will be like in the other camp

The artificial "line" is, strange to say, desired by many girls, as in the case of a freshman girl who said she wanted a boy with a "nice line" The line is necessary because there is the need to feel loved, in spite of the fact that the conditions warranting love don't exist in the pattern of college life If sincere love is not likely to develop so soon, the partners are constrained in some measure to fake it Doing so adds to the confusion of genuine and artificial feelings, and reduces the ability to discriminate between them In most instances the line is a typical set of clichés denoting "personality," but the individual touch and mastery that might be found therein is confined to a more or less successful repetition of the common pattern Said one girl "After the first five minutes of a date I know what the rest of the evening will be like"

The forms of dating are somewhat restricted in a college There are the movies, dancing, parties, coke dates, and "parking" The emotional side of dating is also patternized Certain feelings have to come at certain fixed moments A French student I knew went from the frying pan

into the fire when he tried to kiss an American girl on the first date and failed to show the expected affection for another girl even on the tenth date. In both cases he was wrong. One cannot show love for a person on the first date, nor is one allowed not to show such feeling after a number of dates. A sorority girl is very keen on not kissing the first time, so that she will not create the impression of being "that kind of a girl." But she does expect a kiss on the second or third date, as the pattern prescribes. If not, something must be "wrong with the fellow." Many boys, though trying to land a kiss on a first date, would still not like the idea that "she does that with every fellow she goes with." Through similar remarks some of the illogic of the dating situation and the schizophrenia of the persons involved become apparent. Though she will not consent to kiss on a first date with a boy, believing that this is immoral

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It is likewise inconceivable to many American students that in Europe a student may well visit a girl in her room, or vice versa. To them this cannot be but bad. However, with the lightest heart and an almost clean conscience the same girls who are shocked about the European custom (which does not mean what they think it must mean) will go along with their boyfriends in their cars. This reveals an almost complete lack of understanding of the relativity of things. A rule is taken as absolute, not tested for its meaning. The whole of a situation is not considered—only a part. This way of thinking explains why it is possible to keep up a double standard in morals, why chaperonage is believed in when the rules are set for it, and why it is dismissed when there are no such external rules. So the most contradictory forms of behavior are pursued without the contradictions ever being noticed. Students may pet with joy in the back seat of a car, but blush about a slip of the tongue at a formal party. The unquestioned acceptance of the dating pattern accounts for this to a large extent. One does what they all do, and that seems to make it right.

Very probably students do not want to notice these contradictions in their behavior, because if they did, the whole edifice of their nice college life would crumble and they would have to face personally a situation in which full responsibility is required, a responsibility that cannot properly be put on the shoulders of the group and its pattern. The dating pattern, to which they cling so desperately because they find ephemeral satisfaction in it and have never thought of any other, reduces personal responsibility and at the same time makes interpersonal relationships largely impersonal. In the date, one has to act a role, and act it as successfully as one can, but one is not allowed to change the rules of the

from his own self, who looks for support from others because he cannot find it within himself

With this scheme in the background the problem of conformism in dating can be better understood. It is rather easy to see how conformity to the pattern comes about, what kinds of social control are in action, and how they are responded to. An important factor in the problem is the element of falsehood which pervades the pattern. The participants use the gestures of love but do not convey the corresponding feelings, they pursue dating with great earnestness, yet think of it as fun and play. These apparent contradictions, we might say, are resolved on another level of conformity. In the general acquiescence to the imprecise standards of the society at large they merge in blurring and confusion. The individual's actions are not seen in relation to a whole, but only as acts in a situation which is not really seen as related to a greater pattern. The individual does what the society sanctions positively, yet he does not see beyond a narrow sphere and becomes enslaved to social determinism.

The particular nature of dating is naturally of influence upon engagement and marriage. These forms have to be taken fully seriously. Yet the dating habits and the established patterns of conformity and artificiality valid for dating are apt to thwart those lasting human relations, like marriage, which have to be genuine and meaningful if they are to last.

### LOVE AND ITS RELATION TO DATING

There is no necessity to prove that the majority of college girls hope to find a husband while they are in college. It is a simple fact. A study of a group of freshman girls at a state university has shown that the primary concern of the girls is security. Such security is first of all seen in a husband—hence the desperate fishing for young men. The girls think of college as a first rate means for the attainment of that end. Furthermore, college provides the possibility of finding an adequate job in case they fail to find a mate. In many girls' minds there is a definite plan of how they should proceed about "love" in college. The first two years should be spent dating with many different people. In the junior year more serious efforts should be made to get the right kind of man interested. If he is the right one, and if he meets the sometimes very high requirements, "going steady" is agreed upon. (Mostly the girl is the motivating force for this.) During the senior year one should be "pinned," then become engaged, and finally get married. Naturally, it does not always work that way, but this is at least the ideal procedure.

America believes in romantic love. America, as a witty Frenchman observed, is the only country in which love seems to be a national problem. Nowhere else is the subject so much talked about. The college ful-

fills, apart from education, the important function of giving young people a chance to "fall in love" and then build a successful marriage. Dating supplies the setting in which love may arise. Yet we have noted before that dating uses the form of courtship but omits its content, it employs the gestures of love but does not take their meaning, it breaks up as a popularity game as soon as love pushes the partners to steady relationships. *Falling in love ends dating.* But the beloved partner whom one wants to marry is found through the dating system. The original relationships between the partners have been prescribed by the very pattern which allows for mutual exploitation rather than for mutual devotion and love. So *germinating love has to develop its flower in a climate which is, by definition, hostile to it.* Love must be foreign to a sphere which revolves around external features, as the dating sphere does with its emphasis on good looks, clothes, manners, and lines, and which contains a hidden element of almost ruthless competition. The date, in its typical form, simply does not allow for the establishment of what the Germans call "a genuine I-Thou relationship."

In dating the Thou is not recognized, it is reduced to an It. One can "adjust" to an It, but one can never merely adjust to a Thou, the Thou has to become part of one. Therefore the great emphasis on marital adjustment in America may be quite a false emphasis. For without genuine individuality there can be no real mutuality—only the association of ciphers.

The date satisfies the need of the individual to feel himself loved and appreciated by other persons. The dating partner wants to have the assurance that he is worthy of love. But the way in which these impressions are conveyed is a false way. On a date the emotional quality that should be attached to the acts intended to show these feelings of love is seldom present. It is therefore an artificial, faked, self-centered love, which means no love at all. Yet in the minds of many students the line between sincere feelings and faked ones has become indistinct through long dating experience. The result is confusion. Therefore the lovers have to repeat constantly to each other that they are madly in love. The truly loved person knows that and does not have to hear it over and over. This lack of discrimination tends to shift the emphasis to the more external aspects of love, it tends to a materialistic conception of love. The prerequisites for love are in many students' minds the very conditions that make for the good date, namely good looks, nice personality, money. Successful dating experience is likely to obstruct the way for the development of love, the participant does not discover the Thou in his partner because the whole pattern is inhospitable to an unfolding of one's self to another.

Many American young people, it is my impression, do not really have

the romantic experience of falling in love. They fall very easily for the person who happens to possess the qualities they have dreamed of. But most of these qualities are purely external, and the experience may be somewhat like that described by a freshman girl:

It came unexpected, you know, like I'd go into a restaurant and he'd come in and Oh boy. . . . My stomach would just jump up and down. I thought I was hungry. And it happens at other places, too, so I decided it must be love.

Of course there is an irrational element in this story, but too often, it seems, students choose their mates because one looks a little better than another, or because "Jim has really much more personality than Bill"—or more money, or higher social status.

American mores do not allow for expressions of young love outside the accepted forms of dating. Love that seeks for fulfillment is confined to the institution of marriage only. Within the framework of dating there is hardly a possibility of nourishing true love; outside the framework there is only marriage; there is no intermediate stage to correspond to Schiller's "*der holden Zeit der jungen Liebe*" ("The charming days of youthful love" is a rough translation). The dating pattern does not furnish, generally, a basis on which a selection of partners is possible with full account of the conditions that are likely to prevail in marriage and normal life, for dating is an abnormal situation forcing assumed roles upon the persons, and requiring adherence to a set of rules which often run counter to the development of genuine human relations.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What is Sonthmeier's argument that the dating pattern is an outgrowth of the American notion of success?
2. For what reasons, in his view, does the dating pattern prevent the integration of social and intellectual graces that ought to exist in the truly educated person?
3. What are the main points of the argument that the dating pattern rests on the prestige that accompanies publicity and display?
4. What are the basic contradictions, as he sees them, in the practice of dating?
5. How does dating reinforce conformism?
6. For what reasons are the persons who follow the dating pattern said to have the "*marketing personality*"?
7. What is the central contradiction between love and the dating pattern?
8. What are the chief themes of Sonthmeier's article? To put it another way, what are the three or four aspects of college dating in America that most disturb him?
9. After reading the article through, look again at the last section, "Love and Its Relation to Dating," and state the principal point found in those paragraphs.

- 10 What special value for his purposes does Sonthimer gain from the quotations he uses?
- 11 Explain how the writer's opinions of dating are related to the general idea that the behavior of Americans reveals too much "conformism."

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What can be substituted for the dating pattern?
- 2 Do you think it is really necessary for a student on a date to conceal his intellect? What reasons can you give for believing it is necessary? What reasons for believing it is not necessary?
- 3 In your observation are Sonthimer's data accurate? Do you think his conclusions from the data are correct, or not? Why?
- 4 Do you think that those students who refuse to follow the dating pattern do so mainly because of a sour grapes attitude, or for other reasons?
- 5 What are the good and bad things about having a "line"?
- 6 What, to your mind is wrong with conformism?
- 7 What bad effects on marriage is the dating pattern likely to have? How can these effects be avoided?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Dating is (or is not) all right and I intend (or do not intend) to keep on with it
- 2 Foreigners don't (or do) understand America
- 3 How to appreciate fellow students as individuals
- 4 Some objections to fraternities and sororities
- 5 Some strong points of fraternities and sororities
- 6 Why I prefer (or do not prefer) group parties to dating.

### ALLAN FROMME

born 1915, is the author of *The Psychologist Looks at Sex and Marriage*, a chapter of which comprises the following article [Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Copyright 1950 by Prentice Hall Inc.]

## *Love and Marriage*

### 1. THE ILLUSORY ELEMENTS IN LOVE ARE BOUND TO FADE

The early stages of our love frequently involve sentiments far more luxurious than we can normally afford for long. The man looks

upon the woman he is about to marry as though she were a goddess, he, in turn, becomes similarly endowed with divine attributes. Each virtue we find in our lover is exaggerated into glorious illusions which sooner or later inevitably respond to the gravitational force of reality. Whereas lovers at first see each other as different from the rest of the species, before long they begin to regain their identity with mankind proper. As human beings, their human foibles appear. Despite the enthusiasm and good intentions with which we enter marriage, we soon begin to act enough like our everyday selves again to reveal our everyday shortcomings. As we let our hair down, we begin to see things which are inconsistent with the idealized image we had previously developed of each other. Elements of friction and mutual disappointment are bound to arise. We slowly begin to realize that no matter how sure we were of our love prior to marriage, maintaining it cannot be merely taken for granted.

## 2 IMMATURE IDEAS ABOUT MARITAL LOVE MAKE DISAPPOINTMENT EASY

Many people enter marriage with such highly adolescent ideas about what to expect that love is bound to be difficult to maintain. First of all, they exaggerate the importance of the superficial interests they enjoy together during courtship and, frequently without even realizing it, begin to think of marriage as a relationship primarily dedicated to the pursuit of these interests. They overlook the fact that leisure time activities cannot, even in marriage, become the major diet of their lives. After all, thousands of people like the same football game, motion picture, or popular book, and yet these common interests in no way guarantee any agreement in the way they react to and interpret the daily exigencies of living. Secondly, many young couples exaggerate the importance of the characteristics in each other to which they were initially attracted. The young man, for example, who intends to devote his marriage to the appreciation of his wife's beauty learns soon after marriage that this is not enough to maintain the quality of their relationship. Moreover, it is doubtful that she is going to look as constantly sleek, svelte, and seductive as he saw her before marriage. Similarly, the young woman who expects her husband to be as fascinating every day in the week as he was when she saw him only two or three times a week is bound to be disappointed. Finally, many people exaggerate the extent to which they can reasonably expect love to effect changes in their own personality. Premaritally the young woman may anticipate cooking, washing, mending, etc., as the delightful labors of love, but it is not long after marriage when she begins to look at a greasy pot in a hot kitchen with the same disgust which she felt before she fell in love.

### 3 DISILLUSIONMENT CAN DESTROY THE WILLINGNESS OF PEOPLE TO MAKE THEIR MARRIAGE WORK

Unless two people are mature enough to know what to expect, the realities of their marital relationship will inevitably disillusion them. Love is a fragile plant and the disillusionment many people suffer in marriage tends to contaminate the soil out of which their love first arose. Once the couple feel disappointed in marriage, they begin to lose confidence in each other. They feel that they have been let down and blame each other for it rather than themselves. In the process of blaming each other, they increase their sensitivity to each other's shortcomings, real or imaginary. Whereas at one time they were able to dismiss these defects, if they saw them at all, as small, unimportant, and outweighed by obvious virtues, now they become a chronic source of irritation. Under these circumstances, even though they get to know each other better, this process of discovery is unattended by an appreciation of what they find. On the contrary, instead of increasing their appreciation of each other, husband and wife each begin to feel that their life together is dominated by what they have to put up with in each other. Depending upon their personalities, this mutual dissatisfaction can engender enough anger and bitterness to make a working relationship almost impossible.

### 4 DISILLUSIONMENT CAN REPLACE THE LOYALTY OF LOVE WITH A DULL LOYALTY OF HABIT

More often than not, however, people do make some sort of adjustment anyway. Though they painfully recognize how different their marriage is from the dreams and hopes they had for it, they settle into a somewhat grudging acceptance of their marital obligations. They do what they have to—work, save, look after the chores of everyday living—but they have little taste for it. The motivation is lacking and the lofty promises they made each other just before their marriage now tend to exaggerate their failure by comparison. They may even turn these unfulfilled dreams into scornful complaints of how sorely they were let down. Husbands and wives in such circumstances do not develop their deepest satisfactions together, but instead habitually seek superficial pleasures outside the home. Even though they may do this together, their pleasure is not derived from each other, but from the activity they pursue. The movie, the club meeting or the card party, is the important thing. Each might just as well have gone alone, for there is no increase in their pleasure by virtue of having each other's company for the event. Their growing reliance on independent pleasure seeking frequently intensifies their conflict. Small differences in preference which might otherwise be brushed aside by the satisfaction derived from pleasing each other are magnified into personality contests or challenges.

which fan the hostility already smoldering between them. Notwithstanding all this, people in a relationship of this sort frequently develop a kind of loyalty to each other anyway. However, it is not the loyalty of love, with all its freshness, spontaneity, and sympathetic insight into each other. On the contrary, it is a loyalty of dependence and habit that grows out of the many things married life forces them to share.

## 5 MARRIAGE CAN REINFORCE THE REALISTIC ELEMENTS IN LOVE

By way of comparison, people who successfully sponsor the growth of their marital relationship increase, rather than obstruct, the value they have for each other. They prefer being together rather than doing things separately. They have a sense of fulfillment about their lives instead of a gnawing, frustrating feeling of what they lack. Their life together is brightened by their joint appreciation of what they have in each other. They give each other a sense of importance and enjoy the security of partnership without pretense. They exercise a positive, corrective influence over each other so that they improve individually and collectively at the same time. Their mutual honesty permits them to keep pace with each other's growth so that they inevitably have more in common as time goes by. Moreover, if the satisfactions they derive from each other are deep enough, they develop a self-perpetuating character. People who are happily married not only think well of the custom of marriage but like to celebrate their own success with it. They approach their anniversaries with enthusiasm rather than the apprehension that they dare not forget them. Their ever increasing community of thought and feeling gives rise to spontaneous agreement. Rather than being pulled apart by the differences in their background and sex, their cooperation and supplementation is such as to suggest each other as indispensable.

## 6 THE FUTURE OF OUR LOVE IS NOT GUARANTEED BY THE CHOICE WE MAKE FOR MARRIAGE

Because of the traditionally romantic way in which we approach love, little thought is given to its marital development. Even though we agree that love is one of the more important ingredients of a happy marriage, we fail to concern ourselves with the techniques of making our love last. Instead we act as though all we have to do is to fall in love and marry the right person. We therefore examine our love very critically prior to marriage and act as though a wise choice will allow us to sit back and reap the marital benefits of our selection for the rest of our lives. It is little more than a pipe-dream to expect any harvest to be so bountiful. We cannot rationally expect this much from any one person. What we ourselves bring to a marriage is just as important in



determining its ultimate quality as are the blessings we expect our marital choice to contribute. This does not mean that the choice we make for marriage is unimportant. It does mean that the task of choosing represents not the end, but only the beginning or the preparation for the development of marital happiness. After falling in love, the next step is to make our love secure, so that it endures the inevitable changes our lives undergo with age.

## 7. AS WE OURSELVES CHANGE WITH GROWTH, SO DOES THE NATURE OF OUR LOVE

The most superficial comparison of newlyweds with people who have been married for ten or fifteen years reveals how significantly love can change. Even though we have little reason to believe that love wanes and finally disappears in a good marriage, newlyweds rarely appreciate the behavior of their older married friends. People who have just been married prize their frequent expressions of affection and generally believe that something in the nature of their love renders them different from other married couples. Because of this, they feel that they will never settle down and merely take each other for granted. They even naively resolve to make their marriage remain a perpetual honeymoon. Although such protestations of love may have great charm, they are nonetheless grossly unrealistic. They are like the sentiments expressed by proud parents to the effect that their newborn son is going to be President of the United States. The point is that the child need not come anywhere near fulfilling this ambition to satisfy the hopes his parents had for him. In the same manner, our love need not grow solely in the direction we initially anticipated in order to yield the satisfaction we later desire from it. As we ourselves grow, we become somewhat different and more complex, with the result that we may seek other types of satisfaction from love as well as expressing ourselves very differently about it. Love is neither lost nor thinned out because people begin to take each other for granted. Perhaps the brilliance or vividness of our initial experiences with love may be dimmed by habit. However, the blunting of these peaks or emotional thrills can be compensated by the deeper and wider acceptance we can develop for each other in the process of living together. Though husband and wife may no longer excite each other so easily and intensely as they once did, they do not need to after a while. They can come to know each other infinitely better than they did at first. They can modify their personalities so as to make their mutual acceptance dependent not upon some few highlights of experience, but upon all their experiences. Whereas at one time they touched each other's life only at certain points, living together in marriage offers them the oppor-

tunity of blending their personalities into a kind of harmony they could never before realize

#### 8. AS WE BECOME MORE MATURE WITH AGE, SO CAN OUR LOVE BECOME MORE DEEPLY SATISFYING

Therefore, contrary to the enthusiastic notions of newlyweds who deplore the apparent loss of love once we settle down, our emotional life can be actually greatly enriched. It is much the same as growing up. For some people this has meant the loss of youth, fun, and gaiety. Others hold on to their youth even as they grow older and use the increase in their efficiency and maturity to guarantee the enjoyment of life more fully than they could when they were younger. So it is with love. We need not abandon the distinctly romantic aspects of love once we are married, any more than playfulness or nonsense need be abandoned once we become adults. The mature person merely adds to his love in marriage and extends its expression to the more familiar language of his everyday behavior. This means that love becomes part of our way of life rather than a mere set of feelings we only occasionally and extravagantly express. We add to the passion, tenderness, and worship of romantic love the even more reliable virtues of care, belongingness, mutual understanding and respect. Our love, then, becomes the basis for a true partnership of feeling.

#### 9. MARRIED LOVE WAXES OR WANES WITH OUR ABILITY TO SUPPORT THE DAILY NEEDS OF LIVING TOGETHER

The development of such a love is not nearly so easy as its more elementary romantic counterpart. Instead of feeding on absence and the imagination, love in marriage rises or falls with our ability to meet the daily problems of living together. Our own emotional virtues and shortcomings will do more to determine the character of our love than will the initial intensity of our feelings or good intentions. The reason for this is that in love, too, actions speak louder than words. Although pretty speeches and ambitious promises may encourage the growth of love at first, unless our behavior remains reasonably consistent with the romantic expectations we developed in each other it is foolish to believe that love will thrive. The simple truth of the matter is that the grand passion we occasionally express in our lovemaking is not enough to support the daily needs of the working relationship of marriage. Our love requires *some* expression far more often than it requires its most eloquent expression. Disappointment therefore is bound to follow our inability to take advantage of the countless opportunities we have for this in the daily contacts which marriage provides. However, these are

the very contacts which bring the more pedestrian portions of our personality into prominence. There is no music in the clatter of after dinner dishes, no romance in going over bills together, and little if any love in the occasional scraps a married couple are bound to have.

## 10 MARRIAGE INEVITABLY MAKES PROSAIC DEMANDS OF LOVE

This suggests that a married couple can continue to love each other only if they fulfill the requirements of living together satisfactorily. Popular thought frequently puts this matter the other way around, that is, a couple fall out of love and because of this find it difficult to live together. Even though this is true in the case of many marriages, such a line of thought leaves unanswered the question of why the couple did fall out of love. The analysis of this aspect of the problem almost always reveals how unsuccessfully the small daily obligations of married life have been met. As living together becomes burdensome and wearying, love too becomes stale. Even when such people occasionally feel some of the affection they once had for each other, they cannot help but recognize how inconsistent it now is in the framework of their present marital relationship. They might even shy away from the last glimmerings of their love because they are no longer certain of how it will be received. It becomes easy therefore to be attracted elsewhere and, as people do they begin to regard their home life as still worse.

## 11 AS PASSION SUBSIDES, DAILY ATTENTIVENESS AND CARE ARE NECESSARY FOR THE SUPPORT OF OUR LOVE

We can do a great deal to prevent falling out of love by approaching marriage with the realization that *our desire for deep going responsiveness cannot be satisfied by passion alone.* The elements of mystery and novelty which figure so prominently in the beginnings of love are inevitably dissolved by the proximity of living under one roof. Passion thus becomes more difficult to support, and, even though it is unquestionably an enjoyable luxury, daily attentiveness and care answer *more of our emotional needs.* Just as bread is said to be the staff of life, so does an awareness and respect for each other's feelings constitute the best diet for love. Although the phrase "I love you" can perhaps bear more repetition than anything else we might say in this connection, it is not always the most appropriate thing we can say. A woman is frequently more interested in hearing her husband say something nice about the meal she has cooked, the hat she has bought, the curtains she has made or about any other of the numerous activities which occupy her daily existence. Similarly, a man anticipates with equal pleasure his

wife's approval of his business accomplishments, his apparent understanding of politics, his behavior at the party the other night, or his way with the children. Literally nothing is too small and unimportant for approval, and living together successfully demands this kind of attention. In this way, husband and wife give each other the reassurance and confidence that they made the right choice for marriage.

## 12. LOVE EASILY DISAPPEARS IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF DISRESPECT

In order to be attentive enough to promote the growth of our love, we must have an abiding faith in the essential worth or merit of the person with whom we choose to live. Although most of us feel this way at the start of our marriage, our own lack of humility frequently prompts us to act as though we had no respect for the competence or intelligence of our marital partner. It is by no means uncommon, for example, to find a husband disrespectfully critical of his wife's apparent ineptitude with domestic finances, political opinions, or even her ability to select a radio program or motion picture for an evening's entertainment. Women similarly deride their husbands for their unthinking extravagance over some gadget, their inability to recognize that they are being fooled by some of their friends, or their great failure to appreciate even the color scheme of a room. There may even be considerable truth in any and all of these accusations. However, it is absolutely essential for our love that we maintain our overall respect for each other even though we may become aware of shortcomings. People cannot afford to treat each other with ridicule and contempt and yet expect to have each other's respect. The man who finds his wife's opinions on international affairs or banking stupid should not only respect her right to opinion but should also respect her intelligence enough to believe he can improve the quality of her ideas on such matters. Instruction, rather than critical denunciation, is indicated. It is only in this way that a husband can extend the basis of his marital partnership and increase the extent to which he and his wife can live and work and respect each other in the future.

## 13. BEING CONSTANTLY CRITICIZED INHIBITS SELF-EXPRESSION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The tendency for people to be critical rather than sympathetic and respectful of each other in their everyday marital behavior invariably has a drastic effect upon the development of a true partnership of feeling. Because of their fear of criticism, they begin to keep things habitually to themselves. So far as their inmost feelings are concerned, they become strangers even though they live under the same roof. Once people begin

to barricade themselves from each other they cannot expect their love to survive, for they are no longer in the position to understand each other. No matter how well a couple may think they understand each other at first, the success of their marriage depends largely on how much they increase this understanding. There are many things in the life of a woman which are not easily understood by men. And there are just as many things in the life of a man which women can recognize and understand with no less difficulty. Since marriage brings people together who were strangers for many years, there are bound to be serious gaps in their understanding of each other. Certainly we cannot expect overnight to learn the complex texture of a person's needs and desires well enough to be able to share the many facets of his or her life. It is therefore necessary to encourage, rather than inhibit, self expression in marriage. The more honest we are with each other, the better can we expect to enjoy mutual understanding in the long run.

#### 14 LOVE CAN THRIVE ONLY IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF EMOTIONAL FREEDOM

Keeping our feelings about things to ourselves can be the first serious sign that love may be already on the wing. Men and women maturely in love learn to feel as emotionally honest and spontaneous with each other as they do by themselves. However, it is by no means easy for people, even though they are married, to approach each other with such lack of pretense. Their own past together constitutes an obstacle to such behavior. During their courtship or the early months of marriage, an untoward look or an unpremeditated remark was enough to arouse suspicions of the absence of love. Yet we cannot expect to go on this way. Life is bound to develop increasing frustrations for us unless we feel free to be and act like ourselves. The emotional cost of supporting our pretenses is too great for a satisfying domestic life. Being really and truly in love should give us the rare privilege of being really and truly ourselves. Even though many of us like to believe we are already sufficiently frank and honest with the world, we work at the job of keeping up appearances despite ourselves. It is precisely because of this that ideally there is no place like home."

#### 15 HONEST SELF EXPRESSION IS BOUND TO CREATE STRONG DISAGREEMENTS OCCASIONALLY BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

There is no doubt that when husband and wife face each other habitually without pretense many difficult situations may arise for them. Take the case of the woman, for example, who is deeply annoyed about the way her husband discusses things with their friends. She feels that

he expresses his opinions far too strongly, monopolizes the conversation, and fears that he may be regarded by others as opinionated and pedantic. In all honesty, when they get home from a party one night, she tells him what her feelings are. The chances are small indeed that the man will comment favorably on the honesty with which his wife approached him. In all probability, he will turn most unfavorably on what he interprets as a false accusation and a heated argument will follow. In many other instances when husband and wife reveal their feelings or beliefs to each other, they plunge themselves into disagreement which they avoided up until that time. A man, for example, may one day make a clean breast of it and tell his wife how difficult he has found it to entertain some of her friends. Even though he previously gave his wife the impression that he liked these people, he now could spare her feelings no longer. In her defense of her friends, his wife can easily misinterpret many of his remarks as personal accusations and here, too, husband and wife now find themselves battling about something they had apparently accepted.

#### 16. SELF-CONTROL AND TACT ARE NOT INCONSISTENT WITH HONESTY

It should be clear that although honesty is unquestionably the best policy in marriage, we have little reason to expect its rewards immediately. Surely husband and wife will come to understand each other a lot faster by being honest, but this in no way guarantees that they will agree. This will depend on how tactfully, sympathetically, and affectionately they reveal their feelings of annoyance or their awareness of shortcomings to each other. A man is no less honest, for example, for telling his wife a week later that she has had prettier hats than the new one she adoringly fondles as though it were a much coveted trophy testifying the excellence of her taste. Not only are his chances of convincing her much greater a week later, but the chances of hurting her are considerably less. Self control, after all, need not be inconsistent with honesty. The reward which honesty does guarantee a person is the sense of satisfaction and dignity that, instead of merely complying sheepishly to many of the alien demands about him, he is trying to live his own life. When he does agree with his wife, their agreement is genuine and involves none of the frustrating effects of having to falsify their feelings. When they cannot agree completely and compromise is necessary, they know that, having honestly revealed their inclinations, they have at least reached as much agreement as their relationship permits. These are the people who can derive the most out of marriage. By being true to themselves, marriage becomes a means of self-expression rather than self enslavement.

## 17. EVEN OCCASIONAL ANGER AND RESENTMENT DO NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THE ABSENCE OF LOVE

There are, of course, many times in our daily behavior when our feelings find expression despite our more rational desire to control them. After all, we all have our moods and momentary interests which superficially crowd out any conscious awareness of love. In fact, there are even times when, as a result of the frustration a man develops during a working day, he may turn angrily on his wife despite her innocence of the blame he heaps upon her. It is virtually unavoidable that any husband and wife will on occasion face each other with anger, resentment, or exasperation. Yet none of this is necessarily ruinous for love. The fact that a man is out of sorts does not mean that he no longer loves his wife, for there are doubtless other times when he abounds with sweetness and love. If we lay any claim to maturity at all, we ought to recognize this and not permit ourselves to be overwhelmed by any one incident. Unlike children, we should be able to take some of the less pleasant incidents in our lives without too much stress. There is no reason to believe that true love involves nothing but unswerving devotion, because such an idea runs counter to the variability of human nature itself.

## 18. THERE IS GREATER VARIABILITY IN OUR BEHAVIOR AT HOME THAN ELSEWHERE

The fact that we can blow off steam every once in a while at home actually helps us keep our emotional equilibrium. It has a cleansing or cathartic effect upon us, and because of this it might even be unwise for a husband or wife to judge such an outburst too harshly. As a matter of fact, people who have been married for many years learn to understand each other's moods well enough to be able to dismiss such incidents with little concern. Not that they look forward to being the innocent butt of each other's anger. It is simply that they know how much more variable their behavior will be at home as compared with the way they act outside, and they are not offended by it. A man, for example, cannot shout at his secretary as unrestrainedly as he might at his wife. In addition to the fact that she can quit more easily than can his wife, she expects, as part of her social contract, that he will be a gentleman. The man's wife, on the contrary, expects him to be himself and hopes to stand by him for better or worse. In other words, the range of our behavior is great enough at home to run the whole gamut of emotional change from mean, biting aggression to deep, loving tenderness and passion. This means much less inhibition for us at home and, if exercised within the limits of reason, it represents part of the goal of honest self-expression in our marital relationship.

## 19. MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT CAN HELP US TRANSLATE THE INITIAL ILLUSIONS OF LOVE INTO REALITY

We all realize how difficult it is to help a person we do not know. The desire to guarantee the welfare of someone we love can therefore be effective only if we really know what makes him happy. This means that we must permit the person we love enough freedom of expression for us to find this out. Contrary to the belief that familiarity breeds contempt, we cannot become familiar enough with our marital partner. One of the big tasks of marriage is to learn to admire and respect this person rather than the partly fictitious one with whom we originally fell in love. When people fail to do this, they easily become bored in each other's presence. They lose whatever sympathy, understanding, and satisfaction they originally derived from each other. Once self-expression is blocked, they are prone to become critical of each other. Being drawn apart in this manner, they may periodically try to find their love once again in terms of its earliest expression. Their years of familiarity, however, have already dissolved most of the novelty and mystery of their original love. Unless they honestly and courageously face the shortcomings of their present relationship, they will inevitably feel trapped by the discovery that they cannot start over again. On the other hand, when differences in attitude are respected and self-expression is enjoyed, husband and wife feel that they now have something their early love presumed but had actually not included. They may appreciate the memories of their early love but they feel little need to return to it. They have so much more now that, in retrospect, they feel as though they were strangers then. They find their love in many facets of their lives rather than the few with which they started their marriage. Love may not be expressed so powerfully as it once was, but it is expressed far more often in every bit of attention the wife and husband give each other. Under these circumstances, they even develop enough security in their relationship together not to feel crowded out by some of the interests they cannot share.

## 20. THE CAPACITY TO DERIVE SATISFACTION FROM LIFE IS THE PRIME REQUISITE FOR LOVE

It should be clear from the foregoing that the ability to hold on to one's love does not depend upon its initial intensity but rather upon how well-equipped we are to handle the everyday emotional problems of living. In the beginning, love can be pursued and enjoyed by a wide variety of people, despite their personality shortcomings. The polished, perfumed selves we originally present to love, however, are not the selves with which we are going to spend the rest of our lives. It is our unadorned,



workaday selves which will soon reappear. In the long run, our love cannot exceed our ability to get along with the person to whom we were initially attracted. If we are interested in making love an indelible part of our marriage, we must think in terms of the practical, down-to-earth expressions we can give it. Good intentions alone are not enough. We all start out with vows concerning respect, honor, and obedience. Our love will last as long as we can do something constructive about our intentions. The self-control and understanding of a well-adjusted person are of enormous help in this connection. Short of this, we must try to be as realistic about love as possible. Everything we can do to improve our daily relationship with our marital partner helps to improve our love. The happier a man makes his wife, the more important does his happiness become to her. It is not uncommon for many people to hit a snag occasionally and find their love strained in a manner they cannot easily define. The more honest they have been with each other and the better they understand each other, the easier will it be for them to resolve their problem. People must know each other thoroughly to live together successfully. This does not mean that a man will always be in agreement with his wife, but rather that he is interested in minimizing any hurt she may incur through denial, disagreement, or correction. The most mature person loves well by loving consistently.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Summarize Fromme's first five sections as well as you can in a single sentence.
- 2 Summarize his sixth through eleventh sections as well as you can in a single sentence.
- 3 What are the chief elements that go to make up the over-all, mutual respect of which he speaks? (twelfth and thirteenth sections)
- 4 Describe the principal elements of "emotional freedom" (fourteenth through eighteenth sections)
- 5 What are the principal elements of satisfaction from life as Fromme explains the term? (nineteenth and twentieth sections)
- 6 In what ways are Fromme's section headings useful? What relationship do they have to his paragraphs?
- 7 Show how Fromme's article makes use of antitheses like illusion and reality, immaturity and maturity, romantic and prosaic, constraint and freedom.
- 8 Point out several instances in which he uses concrete illustrations or examples. Would more such illustrations have improved the article or not?
- 9 To what degree do you consider the article a unified whole? What elements help to make it a unified whole, and what elements detract from its unity?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Do you think it is unavoidable that a couple will begin marriage with a set of illusions about each other? What are some of the commonest illusions?
- 2 By what means can a couple try to achieve "spontaneous agreement" and cooperation?
- 3 What are some of the new satisfactions that can arise when a couple has lived together for some time?
- 4 Do you think it is likely that a couple will come to understand one another completely? In what respects do you think it is especially difficult to achieve understanding of a husband or a wife?
- 5 What are likely to be the chief difficulties encountered in an attempt to achieve complete honesty with a husband or a wife?
- 6 What are likely to be the chief difficulties that arise on the path to emotional freedom and honesty?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 How to avoid deceiving yourself in choosing a mate
- 2 A happily married couple and how they achieved their happiness
- 3 It's good to blow off steam
- 4 The qualities of character to look for in a husband (or wife)
- 5 Don'ts for married couples

## DAVID R. MACE

*born in Scotland in 1907 is now a professor of Human Relations at Drew University, he has written Marriage The Art of Lasting Love and Hebrew Marriage [From The Art of Lasting Love, by David R. Mace, Copyright 1952 by David R. Mace reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company Inc]*

## The Case for Marriage Counseling

Tom and Ethel began their married life with the usual hopes and dreams. As they looked into each other's shining eyes it seemed impossible that anything could ever go wrong between them. The great love that burned and glowed in their hearts seemed like an unquenchable fire.

Now that seems a memory of very long ago. They have had good times together. But it's no use pretending that all is well. Things just haven't turned out as they expected. They have tried hard to stop the rot. But their efforts have been unavailing. They know that little by little they are drifting apart. They have acknowledged as much to one another.

The urgent and important question is What should they do about it? Is it any good seeking help? If so, how should they go about it? Have marriage counselors really anything to offer?

The best way we can answer these questions is to see what couples generally do when they are in this predicament and then to ask ourselves seriously, as friends of theirs, whether Tom and Ethel might fare better if they were to pursue a different policy

The first line adopted by any normal married couple in trouble is to attempt to straighten things out by themselves That is natural and, within reason, it is good and right The great majority of marriage tensions are, in fact, resolved that way Tom and Ethel talk things out They achieve understanding They reach agreement The storm blows over They themselves become more mature people and their marriage is strengthened as a result of making this effort at mutual adjustment

But sometimes conflicts arise which don't clear up so easily As Tom and Ethel have already discovered, there is a type of marital storm which stubbornly refuses to subside Yet they wrestle on They feel they must They have been taught that the relationship between husband and wife is a peculiarly intimate and private one, and that when two people decide to live together the way they manage to get along is essentially their own affair To admit failure and call in someone else would be a humiliating recognition of their incompetence No, no, they must battle their own way through

As time passes, however, the strain between Ethel and Tom increases They are making no progress Things are getting worse rather than better Anxiety piles up, until finally one of them, unable to resist a convenient opportunity, spills it all out to some bosom friend or some sympathetic relative Or it may be that the friend or relative suspects trouble and begins probing Whichever way it happens, it amounts to the same thing The story is out Someone else knows A new phase has begun

Naturally, that someone else feels responsible Let us suppose she is a woman friend To her the vital secret has been entrusted She must justify the confidence placed in her So she gets busy, adopts the role of marriage counselor, and embarks on a campaign to put things right Some times she succeeds Marriages are mended that way and stay mended

But just as often the amateur counselor fails Naturally she doesn't readily admit defeat She struggles on as long as she can—just as Tom and Ethel themselves did in the first place—before she is willing to consider getting further advice But when at last she knows she is really beaten, she usually changes her policy and is as anxious to be rid of the responsibility as she was at first to assume it Or, just as likely Tom and Ethel realize that she is giving them no help, and one or the other of them turns in some new direction

This process may go on for a long time I have known couples who put their affairs in the hands of a succession of would be helpers Sometimes these worked independently Sometimes they collaborated They tried this, they tried that. As one amateur counselor grew weary of the task, there was always another, full of some new remedy, ready to take it up Marriages have been known to survive this lacerating process and make good But they have been the exception rather than the rule

If by this time Tom and Ethel are not reconciled and restored to each other, their marriage is in a pretty bad way The disharmony between them has probably passed over into the chronic phase The clear sign of this is that one or the other of them has lost interest, no longer wishes to mend the marriage, and therefore ceases to co-operate Tom may by now have retired into himself and become aloof and cynical Ethel may have fled back to her mother Or either of them may have formed a new emotional attachment outside the marriage

All too frequently it is not until this point that the qualified marriage counselor is called in—and usually by the forlorn and despairing partner who now alone remains interested in the possibility of reconciliation A distracted Tom or Ethel will appear on the counselor's doorstep, all unannounced, with a sorry tale of disaster, or will call up or send an urgent letter begging for an immediate interview

Consider the counselor's position For months—perhaps for years—this crisis has been steadily building up At the time when Tom and Ethel were wrestling with it alone, the skilled insight of the marriage expert could have enabled them to understand what was happening beneath the surface and guided them in handling it successfully While the well meaning but unqualified friends and relatives were doing their bungling best, more specialized knowledge could have utilized the diminishing will to co-operate and applied it at the points where it was most likely to rekindle mutual love and trust. But at the time when these were real and promising possibilities the counselor was not allowed to intervene His superior knowledge and skill were permitted to come into operation only when ignorance and incompetence had mutilated the marriage almost beyond repair

Even so, there are marriages which at this late hour have been mended by patient and enlightened counseling—plucked as it were from the very jaws of marital death But if in other cases the counselor has to record failure and Tom and Ethel end their dreary downward progress in the divorce court, who is to blame? Not the counselor, surely Would it be fair to condemn a surgeon as incompetent if the condition of his patients was well nigh incurable by the time they came within reach of his healing knife?

I believe I have given a fairly accurate picture of what normally hap-

pens to people like Tom and Ethel when their marriage goes wrong. It is a tragic and disturbing story. Behind it lie facts which must be faced—facts which are of vital importance to the happiness of thousands of nice young married people, facts upon which the security and stability of many homes depend.

Now let us go back over the story, examine the implications of the facts which it brings out, and see how Tom and Ethel could have done better. By way of making the issue as clear as I possibly can, I want to make four assertions.

### 1 PROBLEMS MAY ARISE IN ANY MARRIAGE WHICH THE COUPLE CANNOT SOLVE BY THEMSELVES

Every experienced counselor knows this. Nevertheless, it is a truth which ordinary men and women are very reluctant to admit. Why?

In the past, we are often reminded, people had to get along without marriage counselors. In the main, this is true. But what is definitely *not* true is the supposed implication that in the past people had no marriage problems. In fact, they had plenty. The difference between past and present lies not in the existence or non-existence of marital disharmony. It lies in the attitude adopted to such disharmony. A change of attitude has taken place which has in effect completely altered the whole situation.

The Toms and Ethels of former generations had their conflicts. But marriage for them was a final and binding commitment. If they couldn't solve their problems, they just had to go on living with them as best they could. An unsatisfactory marriage was one of the hardships you had to put up with. There was no way out.

Some people would like to see this state of affairs restored. It is better for society as a whole, they say, that the unhappily married should shoulder their burdens so that the institution of the family may be preserved from disintegration. There are those for whom this is a matter of profound religious conviction.

But the inescapable fact is that the Toms and Ethels of today do not accept this view. And it is with facts that we have to deal. The possibility of going on living with an unresolved major conflict is, for the average modern couple, simply counted out. This being so, only two alternatives remain—solve the problem or end the marriage.

Faced with these alternatives, what are people doing? On an appalling scale they are ending their marriages. In the face of that situation, surely it is unreasonable to assert (as people do who consider marriage counseling unnecessary) that they could solve their problems if they really wanted so. They *do* want to. They try. And they fail—just as they failed in the past. The only difference is that then the world never knew that they had failed, because divorce wasn't a practical possibility. There

have always been unhappy homes, but only in recent years have they revealed themselves by becoming broken homes

The sooner we face this, the better Tom and Ethel can settle many of their differences—especially if they are well prepared for marriage. But the possibility always remains that one day they may find themselves up against something they can't cope with by themselves. And that may be, for them, the beginning of disaster—unless they can get help from outside

## 2 FACED WITH SERIOUS MARITAL CONFLICT, MOST PEOPLE ARE DEEPLY AWARE OF THEIR NEED OF OUTSIDE HELP

There is no more complete misconception than the idea that marriage counseling is thrusting at people something they don't want. On the contrary, it is offering them something they want desperately.

When Tom and Ethel hit serious trouble it isn't long before they begin to yearn for sympathy and advice. They can get neither of these things from each other. That is their dilemma. Every time they try to talk things out the tension increases and the temperature rises. They feel cut off from each other. The old flow of mutual tenderness has dried up, and in its place there is hot, prickly irritation and resentment. A terrible anxiety and loneliness assail them. They thirst for friendship, for understanding, for reassurance, as parched lands thirst for cooling, refreshing showers of rain.

The proof of this is that they almost always *do* try to get help. Usually at first they seek guidance as to how the old love may be restored. Later, after prolonged discouragements, they may seek instead a new love to take its place. These two expedients look very different, and they may have very different results. Yet essentially they both arise from the same basic need—the need for love and understanding. A man who turns to another woman does not necessarily want her more than he wants his wife. He wants her as a substitute because, as a result of the marital conflict, the wife he knew and loved has become inaccessible to him and he cannot bear the emotional starvation any longer.

I believe it is very important that we should be willing to recognize this need for help as quite natural and to meet it competently before things have gone too far. Nobody wants to see young lovers calling up a counseling agency every time they have a minor tiff. Yet I would a thousand times rather go to that extreme than to the other, as we do now. The assumption that married people ought to be omniscient and omnipotent and that it is a terrible confession of inadequacy on their part to seek guidance in their difficulties is costing us and them a ruinous price. It will be a great day when we recognize that cancerous growths may ap-

pear in the marriage relationship as well as in the human body and that it is as foolish to delay seeking expert advice in the one case as in the other. Two married people who muddle on in the face of a problem which they both know has got them licked are neither noble nor strong minded. They are just plain fools trampling on a healthy impulse which tells them that they need help. They should swallow their pride and seek that help without further delay.

### 3. THE QUALIFIED COUNSELOR IS BETTER ABLE TO DEAL WITH A PROBLEM THAN THE WELL-MEANING BUT INEXPERIENCED AMATEUR

Obvious though this may seem to be, it is far from being recognized in practice. The average man would never think of doctoring his neighbor's tooth or offering to represent him in a lawsuit. But he will cheerfully and with great confidence embark upon the treatment of his neighbor's marital problems. That, he considers, is something well within his powers.

On the face of it, he seems to have a good deal of logic on his side. It could be argued that dentistry and the practice of law are specialized functions in a way in which marriage counseling is not. It could be said that a relative or a neighbor would know Tom and Ethel better than a complete stranger and would therefore be better able to understand their conflicts. There is truth in both of these statements. But it is the kind of truth which is highly dangerous because it is only part of the truth, and the other part, being submerged, easily escapes notice.

I do not deny that friends and relatives sometimes bring about complete and lasting reconciliation between estranged married couples. For this reason I disagree with some of my professional colleagues in that I believe excellent work can be done by lay counselors who are carefully selected and suitably trained. But one brilliant success does not make a counselor, any more than one swallow makes a summer. Success which is a lucky chance and not based on careful, accurate diagnosis and the application of the appropriate remedy is a very dangerous experience. It results in false confidence, self deception, and a desire to achieve further successes. A man or woman impelled by this kind of success into counseling will almost always in the end do more harm than good.

The truth is that marriage is a very complex relationship, and a marriage in trouble is usually poised on a knife edge from which it is fatally easy, by wrong handling, to hurl it straight to disaster. Success in the responsible work of marriage counseling requires the delicate touch of one who knows exactly what he is doing and whose insight comes from a thorough training in the art of accurate diagnosis. Hit-or-miss experimen-

tation may do all right for the mending of soap boxes It just isn't good enough for the mending of marriages

If you tell me there aren't nearly enough marriage counselors about who meet the requirements I have laid down, and that some who claim to do so are phony, I shall have to agree with you That's a challenge which society must face, and the sooner it is faced, the better But it doesn't alter the fundamental truth of the principle for which I am contending—that whatever makeshift arrangements we have to be content with for the time being, ultimately the handling of marriage problems ought to be left to those who by temperament and training are fitted for what is undoubtedly one of the most delicate forms of social and personal service

#### 4 EVEN THE SKILLED COUNSELOR MUST BE GIVEN A PROPER CHANCE BY HAVING MARRIAGE PROBLEMS BROUGHT TO HIM AT THE VERY BEGINNING

As I have already tried to show, the trouble about so many amateur counselors is that, far from helping the general situation, they are actually making matters worse Despite their good intentions they are turning remediable cases of marital disharmony into chronic cases and burying the skilled counselor beneath such a burden of these latter that he has little freedom to do his real job

At the risk of being considered coldly utilitarian, I want to say that it is a waste of a skilled counselor's time to have to tackle chronic cases Before he can apply his expert knowledge at all, he may have to employ hours of tactful persuasion in order to get the discouraged and disillusioned partner to be willing to co-operate Even so, the counselor may in the end find that the fellowship of the marriage has so far disintegrated that all his efforts are unavailing. Yet in the time given to struggling with that one advanced hopeless case he might have saved ten other marriages by *preventing* them from ever degenerating to the same point.

Here is the deadlock which we must at all costs try to break So long as Tom and Ethel delay seeking help while precious time is wasted and their conflicts grow steadily worse, so long as they consult amateurs at the stage when experts could save the situation, and turn to experts only when it is past saving, so long as amateurs apply their unskilled therapies to remediable conditions and thereby make them irremediable, instead of placing them in competent hands without delay so long as this vicious circle goes on, we shall continue to see marriages break which need not break.

The alternative is simple and clear-cut If we would all agree to recognize the truth of the four simple statements which I have set out above,



and *act on them*, a change would at once begin to take place. Married people would learn to seek help at a point where it would be comparatively easy to clear up their conflicts and before they had the chance to do deep and permanent harm to their relationship. The inexperienced, recognizing their limitations, would make it their business to direct couples to trained counselors. The immediate result would no doubt be a temporary bottleneck which would emphasize the dearth of competent, trained people in this field. But once the need was recognized as urgent, steps would have to be taken to meet it. If the public insists on having properly qualified marriage counselors and learns to make the right use of their services, their number will certainly increase, for demand always creates supply.

I have had many years of experience in marriage counseling. Gradually, with increasing force, it has been borne in upon me that in the field of human relations we are today in the same state of floundering confusion as was the field of physical health in the Middle Ages. Ignorance and misinformation, reliance upon "hunch" remedies, quackery and chicanery everywhere abound. Consequently well meaning men and women are finding themselves defeated and broken in their sincere and commendable efforts to find happiness together. The total cost to the community, direct and indirect, of disharmony in marriage must at the present time be quite appalling.

Yet much of that misery can be proved to be quite unnecessary and wickedly wasteful of the best elements in human life. A small but resolute body of men and women, informed and widely experienced, has pioneered the way to a proved solution of most of the troubles which spoil married life by blighting love and destroying comradeship. To those who have seen what can be achieved by marriage counseling, at its best and given a proper chance, there is no possible doubt that the answer lies in our hands. All that is needed is to awaken the community from its deadly lethargy and skepticism and to provide for human relationships the equivalent of the services now being provided to maintain the physical health of the community. I do not mean to suggest that this will be an easy task. But I do assert that it is a task which, given our present knowledge and insight and a proper pooling of our available material and spiritual resources, can positively be accomplished.

Finally, this is everybody's concern. Old and young, rich and poor, privileged and unprivileged, we all have a stake in the happiness of the community's homes. Tom and Ethel are to be found, differently named but essentially the same people with the same problems, in every land beneath the sun. The success of their marriage is ultimately as important to the health and happiness of the society to which they belong as it is to their own health and happiness. You and I cannot affect indifference as

they struggle to find harmony and fulfillment in their shared life, for Tom might easily turn out to be your son—and Ethel might be my daughter

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What, according to Dr Mace, is the usual sequence followed when a couple find that their marriage is in difficulties and begin to seek advice?
- 2 What are the characteristics of what he calls the "chronic phase" of disharmony in marriage?
- 3 In what respects do present day marital difficulties differ from those of the past?
- 4 On what grounds does Dr Mace justify his position that it is proper and natural to seek help in marital difficulties?
- 5 What are the arguments against non professional efforts to repair marriages?
- 6 What are the arguments for consulting a marriage counselor early?
- 7 Compare Mace's paragraphs with those of the previous article ("Love and Marriage") What differences in the approach and method of the two writers account for the differences in paragraphing?
- 8 What advantages does Mace gain from inventing the couple named Tom and Ethel?
- 9 What results does Mace say he hopes his article will produce? In your opinion what are his chances of success in these aims?
- 10 The title phrase "The Case for Marriage Counseling," suggests that perhaps the writer intends to present a wholly one sided argument as does a lawyer in court. What evidence can you adduce from the article to show whether this is or is not true?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What reasons can you give to support the view that sometimes people in emotional difficulties cannot find a way out themselves but must have outside help?
- 2 What elements of the training and experience of a professional counselor do you think make him especially qualified to deal with cases in which a non professional would be likely to fail?
- 3 Do you think that, even with counseling, people can change their behavior enough to insure the permanent success of a marriage that has come to the brink of failure? If so what kind of changes in them are necessary?
- 4 Exactly what steps can people with marital difficulties take to be brought into contact with a person qualified to help them—how can they find out where to go for effective help?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 What I would do if I learned that the marriage of a friend or relative was in danger of breaking up
2. Avoiding the temptation to play doctor

- 3 Why people in difficulties generally seek help first in the wrong places.
- 4 Forgiveness key to family harmony
- 5 Dangers of amateur marriage-counseling.

## JOHN LEVY

(1897-1938) wrote a supplement to *Approaches to Personality* by Gardiner Murphy and Friedrich Jensen

## RUTH MUNROE

born 1903 has written *Teaching the Individual*. She has collaborated with John Levy on *The Happy Family*, from which this article is reprinted by permission of Alfred A Knopf, Inc [Copyright 1938, by Ruth Monroe]

# All Children Have Difficulties

A spoiled child is one whose parents are chicken hearted in their attempts at discipline. They go through the motions of punishing the child for misdemeanors, but they are afraid of their own hostilities. Their reproving behavior carries no conviction to the child. Whatever the child does to annoy its parents, no matter how bothersome his conduct is, he is unable to alienate their affections. Even when admonished by adults, the child obtains no satisfying loss of love, only a vague threat of loss that disappears into the air as the punishing hand slows up progressively in coming closer to its destination. Chastisement being so abortive, the child obtains only partial, if any, relief from the guilt tensions accompanying its own inimical conduct. He is by no means grateful to his parents for their over-lenient attitude. This attitude keeps the child in a continual state of suspense about his own feelings and he resents being let off too lightly. The parents' excessive kindness is the worst sort of punishment. This treatment leaves the child a victim of his own tormenting emotions, unrelieved by the customary treatment. Parental loss of love. Spoiled children very naturally cherish vicious resentments against parents. They are furiously angry with adults for their leniency. They display the most dangerous kind of temper tantrums toward the most docile of parents. One boy I know had a father who "let him get away with everything" because he could not bring himself to say a harsh word to his son. The boy's mother had died just after the birth of the boy. The father poured his love for his wife into his attachment for their child. The boy at the age of twelve never had to do a task he disliked. I was present once

when his father asked him to wash up for dinner. The boy swore and cursed and went into a violent rage. I heard about another occasion when the boy blindly fired a gun and missed hitting his father only because he was too wild to take careful aim. This spoiled boy's actions are by no means as irrational as they appear. The boy has been done in by adult clemency. His hope of survival lies in doing something to get the old man mad enough to bring out the father's secret antagonisms. This young chap is pitifully begging his father to mitigate his conflicts by a more aggressive attitude. His swearing and cursing is a pathetic plea for punishment—punishment to assuage the anxiety related to a sense of wrongdoing from which he very deeply suffers.

I remember as a young child very frequently hearing my mother comment to me in a serious tone when I was doing something she did not like: "You're asking for it, young man. Keep that up and you'll get it." Presumably I did keep 'that' up, since I have clear recollections of getting "it" very often. In my work with children I have come across many instances of youngsters actually asking their parents for a licking. One interesting illustration of this request occurred in a family where the nine-year-old son was under treatment for stuttering, itself a psychological malady related to repressed loves and hates. The mother and father were both very tender souls and the son was their only child. One day the boy was discovered stealing money. The mother tried to excuse the boy's behavior—presumably he did not know the money belonged to someone else. The boy would have none of this namby pamby way out: "Sure I knew it was wrong to take the money. Why don't you spank me for it? I dare you to." This boy was asking for therapeutic punishment and having a difficult time getting it.

It is not at all unusual to come across children, as in this instance, engaging in juvenile delinquency of a grossly irrational kind. They steal in a way that must get them caught while appearing to try their damndest to get ahead of the adults. One adolescent friend of mine went to elaborate lengths to cut telephone wires to prevent the bank communicating with his father about checks the young chap was forging. He also arranged to be home to intercept mail. Naturally it was only a question of time before his forgeries came to the father's attention, with much relief to the boy. Punishment of some sort was what he was after, although appearing to dodge it. Another youngster made it a point of pilfering only two-dollar bills from his mother's purse. He was very obviously using this device to put a mythical policeman on his own trail.

These three boys, and many many like them, are not truly delinquents. Their delinquency is of a secondary character. They are primarily seeking punishment by their antisocial activities. This punishment is their medicine. It relaxes them and temporarily clears up their emotional con-

supation as a dose of castor oil temporarily relieves the restlessness of physical tensions. Delinquency in these situations results from an urge to end the painful pressures arising from another source within their personalities, from the unfortunate conflicts they experience in their personal relationships to the family. Here is the origin of their trouble. These children have what they consider illicit desires of both tender and cruel nature toward other members of the family. These desires, whether positive or negative, make them feel like enemies of society. An enemy of society is reformed by submitting to the primitive hostile impulses of the law. These children give themselves up, as it were, to the authority of the family. They try to arouse society or family against them by breaking its rules in a flagrant, inescapable fashion. They run by their conduct to cut themselves off from the love of parents and in this way pay the penalty and get relief for unlawful urges toward their kin.

One of the most characteristic discoveries connected with the psychiatric treatment of these so-called juvenile delinquents is this. Very early in the course of therapy the delinquent activity—stealing, gambling, truancy, or lying—frequently slips into the background. It may not return until the child is again under strong emotional pressure. In the light of our explanation of misdemeanors as punishment seeking strategy we can understand why. The child kicks up because he is very anxious about himself. He is worried about his feelings. By his delinquencies he is dramatically attracting punishment and relief from his anxiety or guilt. In receiving treatment from a psychiatrist the child is getting what he has been "asking for." He no longer needs to steal to get his medicine. He encourages psychiatric treatment as a sort of punishment. This is because the parents, too, look upon treatment as a punishment for the child. They have already threatened to take the youngster to a doctor if he does not behave himself. It is quite characteristic of adults to bring children to the clinic for a good "talking to" by the doctor. One child, nine years old, turned up at the hospital because his father could not manage him. He was much less anxious than his father, however, and therefore felt less the need of therapy. He became very irate in the doctor's office. After stamping around for a bit, he made for the door, calling out "Why don't you treat dad? He needs talking to more than I do."

Another characteristic experience that psychiatrists working with children or adults go through is the discovery that all patients, irrespective of age, consider themselves the worst of all sinners. They are sure that their conduct and thoughts have never been matched for viciousness and meanness. They are afraid to tell even a psychiatrist whom they have picked out as tolerant and understanding how contemptible they think they are. Each patient believes himself a unique specimen of moral turpitude. A man of forty suddenly stops talking during the course of a

fifty-minute interview and very obviously appears in distress. He sighs, moistens his lips, and finally asks for a glass of water. "Doctor," he says, "I can't go on. Not even Freud has listened to anything as bad as I'm going to tell you." The doctor reassures him that as a psychiatrist he does not evaluate behavior as good or bad, but only as human. And that in ten or more years of practice he has become well-nigh shock-proof. Emboldened by the therapist's encouraging and friendly attitude, the patient continues: "Doctor, I want to tell you about a dream I had last night. It was about you. You were dressed up like a swine and I was throwing little shiny white seeds to you." Not even a knowledge of the Bible is needed to help our understanding of this little fable. What is less obvious perhaps is the relationship between the interpretation of the dream and the man's honest distress. He feels himself a miserable wretch because he thinks only the worst kind of ingrate would call a kindly doctor a swine and appraise a helpful conference as equivalent to "casting pearls." It takes much reassurance from the therapist before a patient can accept the fact that all patients behave the same way.

Any child, like any adult, suffers too from believing his naughtiness outstrips all his companions'. Every child *knows* that he is naughtier than every other child. Children, however, have to endure the additional anguish aroused by comparing themselves with grown-ups. Adults have somehow been successful in leaving with children the impression that children have only faults, defects, and vices, grown-ups have only virtues. Children torture themselves with the thought that their parents never do anything wrong, they, as children, never do anything right. A mother explained to her nine-year old son one day that she had been scolded by a tradesman for not being home to receive an order of fruit. She had impressed upon the fruiterer the importance of having her purchase at the house in time for supper. He had made a special concession and delivered it in person. No one was home to receive him. The boy was much intrigued by the story and insisted upon her repeating it. He then made the very revealing comment: "Do adults get scolded too? Am I not the only one who is bad?"

It will be easy for the reader to tie up for himself the adult's and the child's exaggerated sense of wrongdoing, inadequacy, and inferiority with a need for punishment. I am going to leave him to do that. But he will probably want to accompany me while I talk about another aspect of the problem—the need for affection. Human beings—men, women, doctors, psychologists, lawyers, and postmen, girls and boys—are just as much interested in obtaining affection as they are in obtaining punishment. They can never secure enough love and tenderness, no matter how much they are already receiving. They are like the little boy who begs for a candy. He is very gratified for the permission he has obtained to "go get

the bottle of sour balls' When he has the bottle in front of him he puts on a wistful face and says 'Couldn't I have two just this time?' If permission is given to take two, he steps up his bargain to three The need for love and affection is universal, and the more love we have, the more we want

To obtain more and more affection we have to resort to various stratagems Children resort to misbehavior for the purpose of receiving affection just as much as for the purpose of being punished Adults cannot help sympathizing with children's weaknesses Children can by misbehavior exploit their parents The stronger the impression of worthlessness they can give, the more affection they receive Parents have to feel sorry for youngsters who always get into trouble, no matter how much punishment is handed out at the same time Christianity, which looks upon us all as little children, expressed this doctrine very well when it made Mary Magdalene one of Christ's most commendable charges The extent of her unworthiness increased her need for the Savior's love and affection We are all Christians in that as soon as we feel sorry for anybody we have to show him affection Children are experts in making us unhappy and therefore affectionate toward them Misbehavior—lying, stealing, laziness, backwardness, temper tantrums—pulls at our heart-strings as much as it raises anger and blood pressure.

One important way in which children obtain human sympathy is through neurotic sickness They have learned in the course of the usual childhood diseases—chicken pox, measles, colds, and tonsillitis—that they receive at such times an extra large portion of loving care They have learned too that when they are sick they are the only child in the home, no matter how many brothers and sisters they may have All the affection that was previously divided among all the members of the family becomes their very own The other children are temporarily forgotten The sicker the child, the greater our affection for it These principles underlie the development of psychological illness

Many children suffer from vomiting, headaches, other aches and pains which are as real as the pain and the vomiting caused by appendicitis They have not appendicitis, however, nor have they eye trouble, or indigestion, or a tumor, or anæmia, or toxæmia, or any physical ailment responsible for their plight They are suffering—truly suffering—from an urge for more and more affection, and using the most accurate method they know to get it Their sickness is not the vomiting or the diarrhoea or the constipation or the stomachache That is only a symptom of it Their sickness consists in an insatiable appetite all children have for love Illness, psychological or physical, is a United States Government gold bond which can be cashed in for affection in any family

It is very easy for the psychiatrist to dip into his practice and pick out

material illustrating this relationship between a child's urge to obtain more and more love and the presentation of physical symptoms like those that occur in organic diseases. Fever, pain, swelling, restriction of movements, discoloration, rapid pulse, rapid breathing, incontinence, local tenderness, can be part of an emotional affliction. About forty per cent of the work the psychiatrist does with children is concerned with the treatment of just such illnesses. One of the more frequent types of difficulties that turn up in both clinic and private office is the child who blinks and is unable to stop. He usually has a pair of glasses in his pocket, but he seldom wears them. Sometimes the blinking has been preceded by a bobbing movement of the head or a twisting of the neck. Parents, as well as the child, have had a trying time with this condition. They have usually tried everything to help the youngster: ignoring it, bribes, scolding, rest, school leave, medicines, glasses, country air, osteopathy, fever therapy. Doctors call these involuntary movements of different parts of the body *tics*. Occasionally we make a mistake and call the condition *chorea* or *St Vitus's dance*. This error, easy enough to make, is more likely to creep in when the child has multiple *tics*—that is, restless, uncontrollable movements of different parts of the body at the same time. *Tics* are a valuable part of a child's armamentation for obtaining more affection. The obvious explicit quality of the disability gives it psychological value. It cannot be ignored. It plays on human emotions like a Chopin nocturne or the story of *Oliver Twist*. A "shaking" child is sending out distress signals in universal code. No one, parents least of all, can ignore them.

At this point I should like to make one thing extremely clear. Parents are not responsible for their children's endless demands for affection or the methods employed to obtain it. The behavior children use to squeeze the very last drop of love from adults does not mean the young people have been emotionally starved and have to resort to extreme measures to get attention. On the contrary. It is just as customary to find this affection-seeking conduct among children who have been saturated with love as among children who appear to have been denied it. Children demand more and more love no matter how much or how little they have been receiving. Those receiving little naturally want more, those receiving much equally naturally want most. Parents' sentiments and attitudes, their likes, dislikes, and preferences for different members of the household, seem to have little effect on this fundamental need for an increasing amount of love. Any guilt feelings parents may have for what they believe is their own lack of responsiveness and generosity toward children are unnecessary. No amount of themselves placed at the service of their children is ever completely satisfying to the youngsters. An appetite for affection gets bigger and bigger the more it is fed.

A mother I know has dedicated her life and her love to nursing a



nine-year old girl troubled by a chronic heart disease. The little girl has to stay in bed. The mother has practically renounced her own personal life to be at her daughter's beck and call. To help her daughter she has given up her friends, her recreation, and even companionship with her husband. Whenever the child's health improves a little and the tired lady attempts to get relief by going to a movie with her husband, the girl objects to her mother leaving the house. She makes a fuss and a scene which give visitors the impression that her mother is a horrid person who neglects a sick child. If the mother goes out in spite of the child's opposition, the girl immediately has a relapse. The mother, I am sure, blames herself for the child's set back and vows never to go out again. An interesting aspect of this pathetic situation is the young girl's attitude toward her mother's unending sacrifices. One of the girl's strongest wishes is to go away to boarding school, where, she says, "I can get away from my family." What price parental sacrifices?

To recapitulate. Children reach out to parents for affection. They also reach out as eagerly for punishment. Both emotions seem to be as necessary to them as liquid is with solid food, as bread and water. Children deprived of affection feel as cheated as children deprived of parental aggression. Full juvenile satisfaction demands a heavy meal of both ingredients. If a child is not being bossed enough she feels as my wife did as a child. She was sure she was unloved because, as she told her mother one day, "You never scold me about doing my homework the way Louise's mother bawls her out." The fact that the very bright young lady was the head of her class made no difference to her need for punishment. Children are equally certain their parents do not love them when affectionately allowed to do as they like. My wife received further corroboration of her unwanted status when her mother permitted her to enjoy herself in the school playground playing jacks for an hour instead of returning home immediately after school like other girls on the same block. The fact that the young lady enjoyed endless satisfaction from developing into the local jacks champion as a result of her mother's leniency and tolerance could not stifle her resentment and an urge for unlimited love. She was convinced that if her mother had loved her more deeply, no dallying around the school would have been permitted.

I have seen so many children complain about parents who are too strict and so many complain about parents who are not strict enough that I have been forced to accept as a psychiatrist and a parent this very comforting conclusion for child training. It really does not make very much difference what rules we follow in bringing up our youngsters. Children need both love and aggression from parents. No matter how we seem to govern our own behavior, no matter how we appear to reach out toward the children, children succeed in getting from us both

these satisfactions in one way or another. We may disguise our feelings from ourselves as much as we like. In so far as the child is concerned, there is no such disguise. We may think we are covering up our love or our hate from ourselves and the youngsters and are behaving very rationally and intelligently. We are nevertheless feeding the child these two necessary emotions in some fashion. These are the vital foods all children live on. And they have their own indubitable methods of getting them. Denied tenderness or aggression in one direction, they break through successfully in another to get what they want. Their needs have the strength of fast flowing water. Parental attitudes are like a poorly constructed dam trying to hold back this force. This being the nature of the parent-child relationship, one can repeat it does not make very much difference what rules we follow in bringing up our children. Children are going to manipulate the relationship to get the kind of satisfaction they need to live on, whatever we do. Some plants can in their growth split huge rocks, other plants grow through houses to reach water. The ability of children to obtain their parents' good or ill will is just as powerful, no matter how we adults try to prevent it.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What do the authors believe is responsible for the spoiled child? Describe the reasoning which leads them to this conclusion.
2. What sort of "stratagems" are children likely to use to make their parents show them both hostility and affection?
3. Why should parents not feel guilty for supposed deficiencies in responsiveness and generosity toward their children?
4. What is the chief recommendation of the authors? What are the principal steps by which they lead up to this recommendation?
5. Point out the place at which the authors make the transition from comments on the child's need for punishment to comments on the child's need for affection. Explain how they manage the transition.
6. Point out the place at which the authors begin their final summary. Do they merely repeat, in the summary, points they have already made or do they go on to reach conclusions not stated earlier in the article?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is the conclusion of the article as a whole simply that parents can do nothing to help their children lead happy, well adjusted lives? If not, what do you think parents can do?
2. If in one way or another a child is going to get satisfaction of both his need to be loved and his need to be punished, are some ways better than others in which parents can help him to achieve the fulfillment of these needs? If so, what are some of the better ways?

3. Do you think the authors are correct in saying that a child "needs" punishment? Is it possible that they mislabel as a need for punishment what is really basically an expression of a need for love? Is there any evidence in the article to suggest that this may be the proper interpretation?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. The worst child I ever saw.
2. Never spank a child except in anger.
3. Psychiatry for children is silly.
4. Psychiatry for children is good.
5. I'm glad I was punished.

## *Chapter Thirteen*

# Maturity



IT TAKES A LONG TIME  
TO BRING EXCELLENCE TO MATURITY

PUBLILIUS SYRUS

## Introduction

The concept of maturity has recently received much attention. It is by no means a new idea, but the rapid modern exploration of the mind and the emotions, the new techniques of curing psychic ills, and the advance of sociological thought have all helped direct attention to a quality called "maturity," and have suggested to many thinking people the need for defining the concept much more fully than in the past. The articles in this section represent three different approaches to a fully developed and useful modern definition of the concept.

The writer of the first selection, 'Criteria of Maturity,' is Professor Harry Overstreet, who has for many years been interested in philosophy, psychology, and the area in which these two fields intersect. His book *The Mature Mind* is a systematic treatment of the concept of maturity, which he bases largely on the findings of modern psychology.

The article reprinted here, a chapter from his book, shows the clarity of organization we expect from a well trained mind. His subject is "the linkage theory of maturity." In explaining it he takes up six 'linkages with life' which people must establish in order to become mature.

Though Professor Overstreet's definition has a certain completeness, maturity may be defined in other ways. No one person can cover the whole subject, because the very concept is ever in the process of being forged. As men of various kinds of training and experience contribute to the analysis, each from his own point of view, the concept becomes more clearly defined.

Georg Brochmann, a Norwegian engineer who is also a writer, contributes the article 'Maturity' from an interesting book called *Humanity and Happiness*, which he wrote in secret during the time of the Nazi rule in Norway as his positive answer to the Nazi philosophy.

Brochmann's remarks on maturity are deliberately rather conversational and unsystematic; he writes in a speculative fashion, thinking out the problem by letting one idea lead to the next. He is mainly concerned with the later years of life, and rather than striving for originality he draws most of his ideas from the wisdom of the past. Yet in doing so he manages to achieve a certain distinctiveness and flavor of his own.

The third point of view is that of a psychiatrist, Dr Edward A Strecker In "Their Mothers' Sons," which first appeared in his book of the same title, Dr Strecker points to "momism" as one of the most important causes of the failure to develop and become mature The term, coined by Philip Wylie some years ago, is applied to the behavior of the "mom"—the mother who blights her children's lives by overprotecting them, binding them to her apron-strings so tightly that they sometimes remain immature and unhappy throughout their lives

Dr Strecker was a consultant to the Army and Navy during the last war, and became deeply concerned at seeing psychic instability cause such a large proportion of rejections and dismissals from military service some three million out of a total of fifteen million men His experience with the services led him to suspect "momism" as the chief cause of the failure to reach true maturity, and he wrote *Their Mothers' Sons* shortly after the war to call attention to the problem

Reading the three selections carefully will give one some understanding of the concept of maturity as it is being developed at present, and will suggest numerous ways in which one can guide his own behavior in the direction of that healthy state

The other sections of this book which have the closest connections with this section on maturity are "Courtship, Marriage, and the Family" and "Emotional Health and Good Personal Relations" A survey of the articles in all three sections will suggest the great importance in modern life of the branch of medicine practiced by psychiatrists—doctors who might be called "physicians of the emotions"

## HARRY A. OVERSTREET

born 1875, was Professor of Philosophy and Head of the Department of Philosophy at the College of the City of New York until 1939, when he became Professor Emeritus. He has been deeply interested in adult education and is the author of a number of books including *Influencing Human Behavior* and *The Mature Mind*. His most recent book, written in collaboration with Bonaro Overstreet, is *The Mind Alive* [Reprinted from *The Mature Mind* by Harry A. Overstreet by permission of the publishers, Copyright, 1949 by W W Norton & Company Inc.]

### *Criteria of Maturity*

#### *I*

The most dangerous members of our society are those grownups whose powers of influence are adult but whose motives and responses are infantile. The adult has certain kinds of power denied to the infant. He has physical strength. If he still hits out at life with the anger of a frustrated infant, he can work more destruction and inflict more pain than would be possible to the person physically immature. In the second place, he has authority over someone: he is parent, teacher, employer, foreman, officer of a club, public official, or perhaps simply a member of a majority group that is permitted to keep members of a minority group "in their place." Few adults are without authority over anyone. The adult, therefore, whose emotional linkages with life are still undeveloped has a greater power to make other people miserable than has the child. In the third place, the adult has a vastly increased opportunity to add artificial to natural power through such devices as ownership and membership. He can drive a car and use its strength as his own, he can join an organization and use the influence of numerous others to press a cause he could not effectively press alone. If his linkages of knowledge and feeling are still as few and tenuous as those that fit the power-status of a five-year-old or even a ten-year-old, he can do harm beyond measure.

Discussing the reason why our human affairs are so fearfully out of joint, and applying to the problem his psychiatric experience, G. B. Chisholm has said, "So far in the history of the world there have never been enough mature people in the right places." Never yet, in short, have enough people come to their adulthood—and to adulthood's powers and prerogatives—with such sound linkages between them and their



world that what they choose to do is for their own and the common good.

Briefly, then, we must explore some of the basic linkages with life that an individual must progressively establish if he is not merely to grow into adulthood but to become mature.

## 2

*The human being is born ignorant.* His body, to be sure, has certain kinds of "knowledge" that belong to it by nature. Even the newborn infant "knows," for example, how to make the sucking motions that enable it to take in food for survival. But in all super-instinctual matters the ignorance of that newborn infant is total. His world has, so far, told him virtually nothing about itself. He is ignorant not only of such specific cultural skills as reading, writing, and arithmetic—through which there may later be opened up to him well-nigh incredible vistas—but of even his own survival needs. He can register discomfort, but he cannot be said to know that he is uncomfortable because his blanket has slipped aside and left him cold. *He is at the total-ignorance level of a life in which the knowledge potential is enormous.*

He will never know all that he theoretically could know: it is part of our mortal fate that we die with powers yet unexpended. But he will not survive even his infancy unless he establishes some sort of *knowledge linkage* with his world. He will not mature psychologically unless that linkage is strong, and keeps growing stronger.

It would be folly for us to attempt to enumerate all the specific kinds of knowledge that a human being should acquire in order to rate as mature. One man of forty may know how to prune an orchard—and in that direction may act maturely through that knowledge. Another may know the ways of the stars in their courses; or how to treat the diseases of the human body; or how to load a truck so that there will be, in transit, no dangerous shifting of that load.

Of two men who walk side by side along a country lane only one may know the names and natures of the plants and trees they see; yet we will not on that account call the other man immature. We will not call him immature unless his attitude toward such knowledge brands him so. If his life work is such that he should, for effectiveness, know the names and natures of those plants and trees, but if he has chosen to bluff instead of to learn, then we can call him immature. We can call him so if he pretends to knowledge he does not possess. We can call him so, if, lacking a certain type of knowledge, he self-defensively holds that it is not worth possessing. We can call him so if this specific ignorance is but one expression of a kind of total obtuseness—a general indifference to the world he inhabits.

It is not, in brief, the mastery of this or that fact that marks a person

as mature in his knowledge relationship. It is, rather, his attitude toward knowing and the tie-up that exists between his knowledge and his situation.

If a person has no interest in any kind of knowledge except the sort that insures his animal survival, he is immature. He is leaving undeveloped whole areas of potentiality peculiar to his species. He is, moreover, almost guaranteeing that in many situations peculiarly human he will see too little and know too little to be wise and just in his responses.

If, again, a person, through his adult strength and status, exerts influence that calls for a certain kind of knowledge, and if he makes no effort to gain that knowledge, he is immature. In our culture, the adult is allowed to exert an influence upon his society through casting his ballot. If he makes no progressive effort to learn what is at stake in various issues before he throws the weight of his opinion and his vote on one side or another, he is immature. He is permitting his adult power to go unmatched by adult knowledge.

If, finally, a person takes it for granted that his present store of knowledge is sufficient for the rest of his life, he is immature. Not only will his responses to new situations be inadequate but his mind will develop rigidities of dogma and false pride that will make it into an unchanging anomaly in a changing world. In this respect, the unlettered farmer who does things as his father did them and has no use for "schoolbook agriculture" is neither more nor less immature in his attitude toward learning than is the classical scholar who has not changed an idea or a witicism through a generation of teaching.

Here, then, is one kind of linkage that the human being must progressively build with his world if he is to grow into mental, emotional, and social maturity. Where a person fails to build, and to go on building, the knowledge linkage, it may be, as Thorndike pointed out, partly for reasons within himself and partly for reasons outside himself. If a certain adult, for example, was once a child whose every show of interest in learning was squelched—perhaps by a father who taunted him with trying to rise above his family, or by a "religious" mother for whom education was synonymous with worldly pride, or by playmates who called him "teacher's pet" and shut him out of their games—that adult may well have within himself deep emotional reasons for leaving books alone. He may still, in his unconscious, be fighting out one of the major battles of his childhood, and he may be settling the issue as he finally tried to settle it in childhood—by adopting the standards of those around him in order to win a sense of belonging. Another adult who shows a similar lack of interest in learning may not have faced that particular problem. But all his life he has taken for granted the dogmas and rule of thumb practices of his family and neighborhood. He went through as much

schooling as the other children of his group, with as much scorn of schooling and as little comprehension of it as the rest of them showed. He has, all his life, heard the same political, economic, and religious platitudes pronounced as ultimate truth—and to his ears they sound comfortably good. This individual, in brief, has, for reasons outside himself—reasons inherent in the mores—failed in his mental and emotional maturing. He meets adult situations—and therefore exerts his adult strength—with practically the same information and attitudes that he had when he was meeting childhood situations with childhood strength. Where new facts have been thrust upon his reluctant consciousness, he has quickly robbed them of their irritating quality by wrapping them up in a platitude and denying them any authority over his behavior. The potentialities of this person are as warped and wasted as are those of the person who has stopped learning for reasons inside himself, though his unconscious may be less scarred by battle. Both of these individuals—and their counterparts are legion—are immature in their adulthood, for they have cut short their maturing process and not tried to match increased powers with increased knowledge of what is at stake.

### 3

*The human being is born irresponsible.* He did not choose to enter the human scene, and for a long time after his entrance he is helpless to do much about it. Yet if we hear a grown man justify his lack of responsible participation in that scene by saying that, after all, he didn't ask to be born, we can set him down as immature. For one of the strong ties that must progressively link the individual to his world is that of responsibility, resentment against that fact, or inability to realize it in action, indicates a stoppage in psychological growth.

At the outset, there is nothing that the helpless infant can do for itself or for anyone else. Therefore it has a valid claim upon the attention of those who have brought it into being. In a very real sense, the world owes it a living.

Not many years pass, however, before the helpless infant grows into a child progressively capable of self help and of help to others. It enters, in brief, upon the responsibility life of man. There are things that it can do, there are things, therefore, that other people have a right to expect it to do as its share of the common enterprise. The toddler that fumblingly begins to learn how to dress itself is in training for emotional and social maturity. So is the growing boy who learns to go to the store on an errand and bring home what he went for. So is the adolescent who, driving the family car, shows due respect for speed limits and for the hour when he has agreed to return home. So, also, is the child or adolescent who learns to stand out against the gang in behalf of a helpless animal or

an absent friend who is being "taken apart" So, often—though parents may be reluctant to admit it—is the adolescent who tries out his own mind and his own budding idealism by refusing meek conformity to the world as it is and to the standards and rationalizations that his family and community take for granted. Mature responsibility involves both a willing participation in the chores of life and a creative participation in the bettering of life. Year by year, as helplessness turns into strength, the sound human being takes on a responsibility commensurate with his powers.

The responsibility linkage with life takes on maturity to the extent that three conditions are being progressively fulfilled. In the first place, the individual has to learn to accept his human role. When an adult pettishly protests that he didn't ask to be born, he overlooks the simple fact that nobody else did either. Those whose services he commands had as little to say about being born as he himself had. By his standard, therefore, they have as much right as he to ask that the world wait upon them—the only hitch being that the people upon whom the world would have to depend are also people who did not ask to be born. To mature, in brief, is progressively to accept the fact that the human experience is a shared experience, the human predicament, a shared predicament. A person remains immature, whatever his age, as long as he thinks of himself as an exception to the human race.

The second condition of maturity involves the development of a sense of function. No one is mature except to the extent that there is work he accepts as his own, that he performs with a fair degree of expertness, and from which he draws a sense of significance. By this standard, a woman is immature if she wants all the advantages of marriage but resents the work she has to do to keep a home in running order and to bring up a family. Similarly, a man is immature if he regards the support of a family as a kind of trap in which he, an unsuspecting male, has somehow been caught. Again, the person who cannot settle down—who remains a vocational drifter, or the person who wants the prestige of a certain type of work but resents the routines that go with it, are immature in their sense of function.

The third condition of maturity involves the development of function habits. A child does not yet know how to work out spheres of orderliness, he has as yet no accurate sense of time, he has no capacity to think through a complicated plan and to relate cause and effect so that he can predict what the results of his action will be, his attention span is too brief to enable him to have constancy of purpose. In a very real sense, "A boy's will is the wind's will." Unfortunately, however, a good many grownups, without any such legitimate reason, are as veering and unstable as children.

Some of these adults can best be described as *distracted*, the classic parody of them being the White Queen in *Through the Looking Glass* a poor bedazed woman, always on the run, whose hair refused to hold its pins, whose shawl would not stay straight because it was "out of temper," and whose words, like the mind behind them, went in all directions at once and arrived nowhere. Such people *know* that life is out of hand, they are forever frantic with their efforts to master it, but the things they do are never serenely part of an over all plan.

Other adults who lack the habits with which to carry on a mature function can be described as *bumbling*. They expend enough energy, patience, and good intention, but they seem so to lack a sense of cause and effect that they are always miserably discovering that they have done the wrong thing. Yet others are *self excusing*. Though they may habitually be late for their appointments, for example, there is always a slow clock to blame, or a traffic congestion, or a friend who *would* keep them talking. Others are *self dramatizing*. They enjoy the image of themselves as unconventional, as showing a certain touch of genius in their difference from the common run of men.

The journey from irresponsibility to responsibility is full of hazards. Every individual first encounters his problems of security and personal significance while he is still a helpless infant. His first efforts to get what he wants are made long before he enjoys either independence or competence. They are, therefore, directed at getting other people to give him what he wants. Thus, at the most vulnerable time of his life, he faces a double danger of consolidating habits of 'successful' dependence upon others, so that he never finds a sufficient motive for growing into mature responsibility, or of experiencing so much frustration that his natural drive toward independence is replaced either by a submissive acceptance of whatever happens or by an aggressive resistance.

We now know that many irresponsible adult behaviors stem from causes other than their apparent causes. The person who is never on time, for example, even though he consciously tries for punctuality, may be expressing an unconscious resentment carried over from childhood resentment, perhaps, against stringent rules of niceness and orderliness that set him apart from his playmates and won him the label of sissy. The bumbling person who seems pitifully to fail, and fail again, in spite of honest effort, may unconsciously want to fail—because failure allows him to remain in some measure dependent.

Man, in brief, does not grow automatically from dependence to independence, helplessness to competence, irresponsibility to responsibility. But the linkage with life brought about by such growth is indispensable to maturity.

*The human being is born inarticulate.* In a peculiar sense he is born alone. As he matures, he will build word linkages between himself and his world

Most children soon learn to talk the language of the people around them. Yet few of them continue their verbal maturing throughout life. Few of them, in adulthood, are so able to say what they want to say—with confidence, precision, beauty, and a sensitive awareness of what is fitting in the situation—that the communicative experience holds more of success than of failure. In no area of our maturing, in fact, is arrested development more common than in the area of communication. It is so common that it is not even noticed, it is taken for granted as natural. The person who is mature in his communicative powers is noted as an exception to the rule. The person who is immature—halting, clumsy, obscure, rambling, dull, platitudinous, insensitive—is the rule.

Here, once more, we must look to the environment of the infant and the growing child for the causes. Three factors seem largely to account for arrested development in the area of speech.

The first factor is a simple one: unless some unusual influence enters to change the pattern, most children grow up talking as the adults around them talk. If the speech they hear from their first moment of consciousness is undistinguished and banal, their own is likely to become so. If the speech they hear is fretful with irritation and self pity, or is an instrument of malice, or is loaded with dogmatism and prejudice, their own is likely to be so. Mediocrity is marvelously transmissible by contagion, and never more so than in the area of speech.

The second factor involves the child's first efforts to communicate and the reception accorded those efforts. The small human being who tries, desperately sometimes, to communicate a need through pre language sounds or through half formed words cannot be expected to realize that the people whom he is trying to reach cannot catch his meaning: that even with the best of intentions, they have to guess, and that often they will guess wrong. Every person, it seems safe to say, experiences a good many angers and frustrations in the area of speech before he escapes the initial inarticulateness to which he is born. Where the environment is one of unmistakable love, these angers and frustrations may have small lasting consequence. But where the environment is one of indifference, impatience, or actual hostility, they may become part of a pervasive, un conscious insecurity, and expectation of failure.

Even after the child has grown into a fair articulateness, his efforts to communicate may be so received that the process of his verbal maturing is discouraged and brought to an eventual halt. This may happen if he is

teased and taunted for the way he talks, or if he is constantly out-talked by big-voiced adults and older brothers and sisters; or if the people around him are habitually too busy or self-absorbed to give him more than an absent-minded flick of attention, so that he repeatedly finds himself talking in a psychological vacuum, or if the private feelings he has confided are made public as something to laugh about. The halting of his growth may result, on the other hand, from a too easy success. If "baby talk" that is continued far into childhood is praised as cute, if he is constantly invited to show off, if the whole adult world seems to stop and lend a concerned ear whenever he speaks, unriddling every fumbling word and satisfying every need almost before it is expressed, the motive for the building of the word-linkage with life may be too weak to be effective. Why go through the hard labor of learning to talk well if one can be the center of the universe without that labor?

The third factor is only indirectly related to the child's actual speech experience. To understand it we have to realize that our verbal linkage with life is not merely a word linkage, it is a character linkage *through* words. Speech defects not caused by actual organic malformation are understood, most often, as character defects, as an expression of some basic failure to work out a right relationship with life. Stammerings, stut-terings—these and other speech difficulties are now widely recognized as having their roots in emotional disturbances—in irrational fears, guilt feelings, hostilities. But such "speech defects" as habitual dullness, pomposity, sarcasm, nagging, whining, monologuing, irrelevant meandering, oversweetness, lack of tact, platitudinizing, pedantry, and a meticulous, indiscriminate stressing of details to the disadvantage of over-all significance—these, too, should properly be regarded as "character defects", as evidence that the individual has, for some reason inherent in his emotional experience, failed to continue his psychological growth.

Because speech defects in this broader sense are so common among us they are scarcely noticed. They attract no more attention than a cripple would in a community of cripples.

When we begin to understand the role that speech plays in life, we cannot dismiss the prevalent immaturity of speech. Speech is that through which we most constantly influence one another. From the words of a mother to her child to the words of one diplomat to another, speech is a maker of psychological universes. Speech, again, is that through which we most commonly seek to escape our skin-enclosed isolation and to enter into a community of experience. Again, it is that through which we clarify our ideas and beliefs—putting these out into the public medium of language, we discover whether or not they make sense. Furthermore, it is that through which we transmit knowledge and experience, acting out our human role as builders of a tradition. Finally, speech is man's

most ready emotional safety valve Tests relative to the joys, fears, and angers of different age groups have established the fact, for example, that whereas children of the eight- and nine year-old group tend to express strong emotion through physical action, adolescents and adults tend to express it through words For the most part, however, the type of release they are able to enjoy is woefully inadequate, because they have grown to the age of verbal release of tension without growing verbally mature They are unable to do more than stutter with emotion, or brood themselves into explosive anger They are bound, likewise, by the sheer paucity of the words at their command, they can do nothing more than repeat the expletives, cliches, and slang phrases that have already been worn meaningless with use, so that they never have a chance, through words, to express the strong uniqueness of their own human experience

We may, then, set this down as another basic fact about ourselves our lives are in good order only if the communicative linkages between us and our world are relatively mature and becoming more so

## 5

*The human being is born a creature of diffuse sexuality* He must mature toward a specific and creative sexual relationship

Through the studies of psychologists and psychiatrists, we have already, during this century, taken long strides toward an understanding of our sex nature, but we still have far to go before a full and happy maturing of that nature will be our common lot Sexual immaturity of one sort and another is still—like communicative immaturity—so prevalent as to seem normal

Certain facts about our sex nature and development are now clear The first of these is that our sexuality is born with us, it does not mysteriously come into our lives at some later date At first it is, apparently, little more than a diffuse potential But it is there from the beginning and colors our earliest strongly felt relationships to other people to our parents, first of all Sexual jealousies and attachments are part of the emotional experience of even very young children, and if they are misunderstood or mishandled, they become the source of self-doubtings, guilt feelings, and hostilities which, lodged in the unconscious, may distort all later relationships.

A second fact is that our sex nature goes through certain normal stages of development before it reaches its maturity Because of some emotional experience, it may be arrested at any one of these stages It is almost common knowledge, now—though still pushed off by some people as not “nice”—that small children go through a period of possessive attachment to the parent of the opposite sex The small toddling girl, only recently emerged from infancy and ill equipped as yet to handle any emotional



problems, 'falls in love' with her father, wants him to belong wholly to her, and resents her mother's claim upon him. The small boy similarly attaches himself to his mother. This first period of heterosexual experience is, we have come to realize, the source of many unresolved conflicts that later make their home in the unconscious. It is a wrenching period, not because of what the child feels, but because he does not know how to fit his intense feelings into the context of his life. He is dependent upon both parents, supposed to love both. Resenting one of them—even wishing for the death of that one—he is torn by both fear and guilt. The security-pattern of his life is threatened, but he cannot acknowledge what he actually feels.

This story has been told so often, now, in psychiatric literature, that it is almost an old story. Yet most parents still either remain unaware of the child's inner conflict or greet the outward manifestations of it so as to intensify that conflict. If parents are dependable in their affection for the child, if they do not let themselves become upset by his sudden bursts of hostility, if they give him as much chance as possible to be significant in his own right, and if they are so steadily and deeply attached to each other that the child soon realizes the uselessness of trying to divide them, there is every likelihood that, after a brief period of turmoil, his progress toward sexual maturity will resume its healthy course. If, on the other hand, the beloved parent is either indifferent or overindulgent, while the other parent is hurt or jealous, if they compete for the child's affection, or if they are so at odds with each other that he is almost driven to take sides, there is a sad likelihood that a residual immaturity will mark the individual's sex relationships all through his life.

Other stages of sexual development follow in their natural course and bring their own dangers. Growing children go through a period of normal 'homosexuality'—girls like girls, at this stage, and dislike boys, boys like boys, and have no patience with the curls and foibles of girlhood. If they arrive at this stage with their earlier heterosexual problems well out of the way, they are not likely to become fixated in a permanent homosexuality. But if they are already carrying a burden of unresolved guilt, it may happen that they will head toward an adulthood of psychological, if not physical homosexuality. The girl may grow up into a woman who still feels that all men are crude and filthy minded, the boy into a man who still despises women and is happiest as part of a male gang.

Adolescence is the second period of intense heterosexuality. Now, however, the object of affection is not the parent of opposite sex, but a member of the young person's own age group. There are several reasons why adolescence is a problem time. Glandular and other bodily changes are taking place with distracting rapidity and are accompanied by such mental and emotional changes that the individual hardly knows himself

Also, at least in our culture, it is a period when the boy or girl, on the verge of adulthood, is needing to feel independent and is in frequent conflict with parental standards. Since intensified sexual feelings and an intensified need to prove himself as an individual are coincidental, they tend to merge—and a flouting of sex standards becomes one of the preferred ways of establishing independence. Relationships to members of the opposite sex in most cases are not steady. The individual falls into love and out of love. Other factors not themselves sexual may add to the adolescent's emotional unrest and may color his attitude toward sex, such as uneasiness about his vocational future, or constant awareness that he may be caught in war before he can build a life of his own. Many conflicts, in brief, heighten the sexual tensions of adolescence and may, if unresolved, encourage a lasting immaturity. The philanderer, for example, who all his life drifts from one woman to another, is a person whose sexual maturing has been arrested at the adolescent level. No one can be called sexually mature, it would seem, until he accepts his own sex nature without guilt, incorporates that nature in a rational life-plan, and is able to make sexual experience the basis of a sustained, mutually fulfilling, and creative relationship with the opposite sex.

A third fact regarding our sexual behaviors is only beginning to penetrate. This is the fact that sexual behaviors do not rise far above or fall far below the level of our nonsexual behaviors. Sex is one channel through which we express our character. It is not a thing apart from that character. We do not find, for example, that a person whose sexual behavior is marked by a will to dominate and exploit others is a person who, in other areas of his life, has a mature gift for equality. Nor do we find that the person who regards sex as filthy has, in other respects, a finely rational power to measure the worth of things. Psychiatrists are revising some of their first estimates regarding the role of sex. They are beginning to note that while it remains true that a traumatic sex experience can so arrest development that an individual's whole relationship to life will be distorted, it is equally true that a traumatic experience in some other area of life will have a similar effect and will, in part, express itself through the channel of sexual behavior.

We are still far from having the full rounded knowledge of our human nature out of which sexual maturity can confidently grow. But we are at least at the point where we can state with assurance that where the sex linkage is immature there is no high maturity of character.

## 6

*The human being is born self-centered.* To be sure, he has as yet no clearly defined 'self' in which to center. But even less does he have any power to relate himself to other selves. One of the most important phases

of maturing is that of growth from self-centering to an understanding relationship to others, from egocentricity to sociocentricity. A person is not mature until he has both an ability and a willingness to see himself as one among others and to do unto those others as he would have them do to him.

The very existence of a society implies certain forces that temper the raw egocentricity of the newborn, for without such tempering, there cannot be mutual support, common purposes, structured reliance of man upon man. Parents, other adults, older children, and soon other children of the same age group all exert an influence that encourages the child to relate himself to persons other than himself. Smiles and frowns are ways of inducting him into the delights and perils of a social world. Early in life he is taught not to grab everything for himself, not to make a howling nuisance of himself. He is taught to enter happily into the group business of making plans and of realizing those plans. He is taught that there are rules so binding that his own stubborn will cannot flout them with impunity.

In brief, so far as the little self-contained ego is concerned, growing up means growing *into*—growing into a complex set of social relationships, linkages of affection, sympathy, shared work, shared beliefs, shared memories, good will toward fellow humans.

The human potential that seems to be chiefly involved in this phase of man's maturing is *imagination*. Imagination is defined as a "mental synthesis of new ideas from elements experienced separately." It is not, as is so often thought, a process of making something out of nothing. Imagination is rather a process of making *new wholes* out of *familiar parts*.

From the moment of birth the infant has things happen to him that give him feelings of well being or ill being. These are direct and immediate experiences. At first he knows them only as his own. He has no equipment of imagination for realizing that a pin prick which makes him cry with pain will cause similar pain to another person. As he matures, however, he develops an increasing power to make mental syntheses 'of new ideas from elements experienced separately.' He is able to turn *his* experience into *human* experience. He grows, in brief, in social imagination. If he continues thus to grow, his adult strength will be a blessing to those around him, not a curse. For every additional power that he has taken on will have been matched by an additional sensitivity to what it means to be human. He will do unto others as he would have them do unto him because he will feel their feelings as he does his own.

Psychologists are giving currency to a word that is useful in this connection: *empathy*, which signifies the imaginative projection of one's own consciousness into an object or person outside oneself. We sympathize with another being when we suffer *with* him, when we feel

with him. But an empathic relationship is closer—we then enter imaginatively into his life and feel it as if it were our own. Though our bodily separateness remains, we effect a psychic identification. We stop being an outsider and become an insider.

Most people have more empathic experiences than they realize. If they notice them at all, they give them only a passing attention and do not bother to ask through what power they have briefly but vividly entered into another person's being—thus triumphing, as it were, over isolation. At a track meet, for example, virtually all the members of a watching crowd will "help" the pole vaulter to clear the high bar. In a very real psychological sense, they rise with him as he vaults, they share his muscular strain, they enter into the moment of suspense, they descend with him in defeat or triumph—and most of them never give more than a flick of thought, if they give that much, to the psychic mystery of their experience. Similarly, most people will enter into any acute embarrassment that is suffered by a person in their presence—unless some emotional block prevents their doing so. They do not merely sympathize with the humiliated person, they "borrow" his humiliation, and feel it within themselves. Our everyday experience, in brief, testifies to the fact that empathy is one of our human potentials and that it can go far toward saving man from psychic isolation. Also, however, our everyday experience, and the desperate plight of our world, testify to the fact that the empathic potential remains chiefly a potential. Those whom it has genuinely released from immature egocentricity into mature sociocentricity are rare among us. The arrested development of the imagination is, perhaps, the most common tragedy of our human existence.

Doubtless there are many reasons for the early arrest of this power in us, but three such reasons seem to be of prime importance.

The first is obvious: a vast number of children receive their first influence from parents who are themselves emotionally and socially immature. Such parents confirm the child in his egocentricity instead of helping him to outgrow it. They may do so by making him so insecure that he is almost forced into a concentrated self-absorption by neglecting him, teasing him, comparing him unfavorably with other children, quarreling over him, ridiculing him for mistakes that are, as often as not, the product of an overanxious effort to please, visiting upon him moods generated by adult worries but never so explained to him. They may, again, keep him egocentric by rewarding egocentricity by yielding to his every whim, by making him the one fixed center of the domestic universe, by urging him, constantly, to hold his own against other children rather than to share with them.

The second reason is less obvious. In most homes, schools, communities, and even churches, children are encouraged to achieve only a

limited or provincial growth beyond egocentricity. They are supposed to become properly socio-centered in their relationships to special people and special groups of people—family, friends, members of the same class, race, religion, and nation—but they are discouraged from extending their empathic imagination to include “outsiders.” We said earlier that a person will, in some measure, enter into the acute embarrassment of another person—unless some emotional block prevents his doing so. Here we discover, perhaps, the nature of the most common emotional block: the habit of *empathic provincialism*. Many people who would suffer the humiliation of a friend, or even of a stranger who belonged to their own class or race, as though it were their own, will remain indifferent to the humiliation of a member of a different class or race. They are quite literally unable to believe that this “outsider” actually has the same feelings that they and their kind experience. It is this type of provincial imagination that accounts for the perennial capacity of many people to be kind within the family circle and yet indifferent to sufferings of people outside that circle, to be strictly honest in dealing with members of their own class and yet shrewd and ruthless to the point of dishonesty when they extend their influence across class lines.

The third reason is to be found in the fact that most people within our culture are encouraged to live by contradictory sets of values: they are urged to be both *for* other people as human brothers and *against* them as competitors, to be unselfish yet to look, first of all, after themselves. This is to say that they are both encouraged to develop the power of empathy and discouraged from developing it. The not astonishing result is that human relationships among us are more confused than clear—and that many confusions that exist within individuals are projected upon others in the form of hostility.

The overshadowing tragedy of our human existence is that so vast a number of people grow into adulthood with their social imagination arrested. They take on the powers of adulthood, but they are incapable of feeling what happens to other people or of greatly caring whether those others fare well or ill.

## 7

*The human being is born to a world of isolated particulars. He has to mature into a world of wholes.*

At first, he has only *this* pain, *this* satisfaction, *this* fear, *this* anger—all of them tied together by some vague sense of identity. When William James spoke of the first experience of the infant as a big, buzzing confusion, he may have assumed too much knowledge in an area into which no grown up mind can really enter, yet it seems fair to assume that the

newborn child has as yet no experience of *wholeness*—that is, of parts significantly related to one another, of many parts making a total from which each separate part draws meaning. It is in the direction of *whole-seeing* and *whole* thinking that growth must take place if maturity is ever to be achieved. However much of a "buzzing confusion" the infant may experience at first, the time soon comes when his crib, his room, his toys, the people who come and go, who lift him up and put him down and feed him when he is hungry, take on a certain coherence. Things begin to hang together. The child begins to learn what follows from what. Out of heterogeneous data, he begins to build coherent expectations.

As he grows, the areas in which things hang together become larger and more complex: not merely his crib but the whole house becomes his province, then the street, school, buses, stores, the whole city, other cities, the place where he works, the associations to which he belongs, the girl he marries and the home he creates, the newspaper he reads and the various forms of entertainment he enjoys, the nation, the human race. What was at first a pin point world takes on size, what was at first a purely physical world takes on a dimension of abstraction—of generalization, principle. What was at first a world of immediacy becomes a world with past and future.

Life, in short, is a process of entering into—as well as creating—*wholes of meaning*. In a quite literal sense, the child mind sees in part and prophesies in part. When that which is whole is come, that which is in part is not so much 'done away' as it is lifted up into its full significance. As we develop the power thus to lift up the part into the whole, our linkage to life becomes *philosophical*. Whether an individual acts as businessman, farmer, mechanic, educator, diplomat, parent, voter, employer, or what not, he is philosophical—and to that extent mature—in the degree that he sees *whole* and prophesies *whole*, in the degree, that is, that he takes into account *all* that is involved in a situation and ties to that "all" both his present behaviors and his future plans and expectations.

Situations beyond number are distorted by the influence of full grown men and women who still "see in part and prophesy in part." They see with the eyes of their own little, limited world, their own wishes, prides, moods, preoccupations, irritations, ignorances, prejudices, privileges, ambitions, and conditionings. And on the basis of what they thus see, they "prophesy." That is, they act in terms of cause-and-effect linkages that are as faulty and restricted as their seeing. The teacher who carries into the classroom a personal anger and takes it out on the children, sees in the situation only what her anger bids her see. She does not see what she is doing to the children and to her own relationship with them through a long chain of tomorrows. The politician who goes to the state legisla

A second basic fact about the linkage theory must also be noted it does not make maturity synonymous with *adjustment*. While it recognizes that an immature person who is also "unadjusted" is in a miserable state and needs help, it recognizes no less that, given certain cultural conditions, the immature person is likely to effect a smoother "adjustment" than is the mature person. He is not, however, because he can adjust himself, on that account a more genuinely fulfilled person. Nor is his influence any less disastrous. His immaturities may be so like the accepted immaturities of the people around him that he and they will move in remarkable harmony, but his immaturity and theirs will continue to create situations in which human powers are frustrated. The standards they set will reward grown men and women for acting like children ignorantly, irresponsibly, egocentrically, and so on. Christ, Roger Bacon, Abraham Lincoln, and many others like them, were all out of adjustment with the going attitudes and practices of their times, but they could hardly be regarded, on that account, as having been immature.

The linkage theory, in brief, declares that it is no longer safe or sufficient to judge the immaturities and maturities of men by the average practices of any institutions or any total culture. Rather, institutions and cultures must be judged by the extent to which they encourage or discourage maturity in all their members. The Sabbath, we have been told, was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Homes, schools, churches, political parties, economic and social institutions, nations—these are made for man, not man for them. Human nature arrived on the scene first. The test of any institution is the releasing service it renders to that nature. As we explore the problem of maturity, then, we shall not be talking either as if the individual existed in a vacuum or as if he existed in an environment of institutions and customs so much more important than his little self that his highest duty and happiness was to "adjust." Holding in mind the kinds of linkage that are essential to human fulfillment, we shall lay a psychological measuring rod against both individual behaviors and social institutions, and we shall affirm, as man's unalienable right, the right to grow in an environment conducive to growth.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. Give examples of failures to achieve maturity that can be classified as failures to establish one or another of the six linkages with life that Overstreet discusses.
2. What is meant by creating "wholes of meaning"? Give an example.

- 3 How can a person be adjusted yet immature? How can he be mature yet not "adjusted"?
- 4 Each of the sections II through VII begins with a sentence suggesting the lack of something. In each case, discover the word or phrase that best states the positive quality that comes to exist when the lack is erased. (For example, the statement "A human being is born physically uncoordinated" suggests the positive quality "coordination" or "accurate control of bodily movements.")
- 5 Make a sentence-outline of Overstreet's article. As you make it, notice how his sections, with their italicized first sentences and also his paragraphs help to make clear the logical arrangement of the material of the article.
- 6 In Overstreet's writing, what is the function of phrases like "in the first place," "the second condition of maturity," "the third condition of maturity," etc.?
- 7 In which section does Overstreet summarize? What elements does he draw together, and what means does he use to combine them into a meaningful whole?
- 8 What evidence can you adduce to show that *before he began to write* Overstreet planned his article so that it would convey a single, distinct idea or theory—though one consisting of several main parts and many details?
- 9 Compare Overstreet's article with another, of your own choice with respect to (1) clarity of basic organization, (2) clarity of organization within paragraphs, (3) clarity of statement within sentences, and (4) firmness of connection between sentences.

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 What branches of learning (or college departments) do you think of as most able to help a student to correct his inarticulateness?
2. What branches of learning do you think of as most able to help a student emerge from "a world of isolated particulars"?
- 3 What is the most natural stage of life for the transition from "egocentricity to sociocentricity"?
- 4 What is the most important stage of life for the achievement of a sense of responsibility?
- 5 Point out some specific items of behavior, not mentioned by Overstreet, to be expected of the mature person as this article defines him.

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 A significant incident through which I advanced toward maturity
- 2 An example of immature behavior by college students.
- 3 Are people improved by being exhorted to better behavior?
- 4 A program for personal improvement.
- 5 Attempts by political parties to get votes by stimulating immature behavior in voters



ture or the national Congress to promote the cause of the particular pressure group that has elevated him to office sees in part and prophesies in part he has no eye for the welfare of the whole society and he does not begin to glimpse the long range consequences of what he does. Intent to please those who have pleased him, he is able to prophesy his own re-election, but he is too short-sighted to prophesy, for example, the squandering of natural resources that may result from his helping his particular pressure group to operate with a free hand.

Plato saw slight hope for human society until such time as philosophers should be made kings. G. B. Chisholm was speaking in the Platonic vein when he said that never yet in the history of the world have there been enough mature people in the right places. He was speaking in the Platonic vein, but he was going further than Plato went. Being a psychiatrist, with a psychiatrist's knowledge of how human beings are shaped in their character structures by a myriad different influences, he would not be satisfied to have philosophers merely in the role of kings. He would know that the "right places" for philosophers—for people who have a mature power to see *whole*—are all those places where influence extends from one individual to another. He would know—as more and more of us are beginning to learn—that in this world of intricate mutual relationships no person is safe to have around if he has grown to his adulthood without building a fairly sound philosophical linkage with his world.

## 8

This chapter suggests, and the rest of the book will try to develop what we shall call the *linkage theory of maturity*. This theory sees man as a creature who lives by and through relationships who becomes himself through linkages with the nonself. It sees him, as a unit of psychic experience, both capable of lifelong growth and subject to arrest of growth at any point where he habitually makes immature efforts at problem solving.

In this chapter, we have indicated certain linkages so basic to our human growth that if they remained unformed or ill formed, we remain fixated in our mental, emotional, and social development. Linkages of knowledge, responsibility, communication, mature sexuality, empathy, and philosophy. The fact that these have been separately and successively listed must not be interpreted to mean that they are independent of one another. The linkage theory of maturity is one of constellated powers or functions. It sees the individual, not as finely mature in one phase of his being and woefully immature in another, but as possessed of a *character structure* in which the several maturities or immaturities are closely related to one another.

This way of considering the individual as a whole of interdependent powers goes counter to prevalent habits of thought. We have liked to believe that a person can be ruthless in his business dealings and yet be a "good husband and father", or that, because of his good intentions, he can be a first rate citizen without knowing the actual facts involved in any issue. We have defended our illusions in this respect by making the definitions of "success" and "goodness" so narrow that even fairly flagrant immaturity can qualify. Thus, by ordinary standards, a man is a vocational success if he "earns a good living", if he climbs 'to the top of the ladder'. He may achieve his 'success' by means that do profound hurt to other people by selling shoddy goods, publishing a newspaper that stirs up racial hatreds, giving such concentrated attention to money-making that his personal relationships are neglected and distorted. But he will not commonly be called a failure unless he loses his position or wealth. By similarly naive standards, a woman may be called a good mother if she keeps her children well dressed and well fed, gives them various educational and social advantages, and marries them off well—even though, because of her influence, they carry into their adulthood sexual pruderies that they call high ideals or social snobbishnesses that make them incapable of liking anyone not markedly prosperous. Or, once more, a person may be accepted as successful in communication simply because he has a large vocabulary and an adroit capacity for holding the center of the stage, even though what he says is far more ego-centered than socio-centered, far more expressive of arrogance than of empathy.

For our human salvation, we must rid ourselves of such illusions as have made us accept immaturity as maturity. Reluctant as we may be to do so, we must acknowledge the hard fact that 'to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away'. Because of the interdependence of our powers, maturity in one area of our life promotes maturity in other areas, immaturity in one area promotes immaturities in other areas. In fact, the human individual is a fairly tight knit pattern of consistency. If, for example, he is markedly ego-centered, we can infallibly predict that he will not be highly mature in his responsibility linkages, or in his sexual life, or in his power to see things whole. If, on the other hand, he is markedly socio-centered, we can predict that his sense of responsibility will be keen, his sexual life will be marked by mature considerateness, and his power to see all that is involved in a situation will be highly developed.

This, then, is the first basic fact about the linkage theory of maturity: it does not measure psychological maturity by any single, isolated trait in a person, but by a constellation of traits—by a total character structure.

## GEORG BROCHMANN

born 1894, is a Norwegian who has written in his native language on drama, engineering and modern civilization [From *Humanity and Happiness* by Georg Brochmann translated from the Norwegian by Frank G. Nelson, Copyright 1950, by The Viking Press, Inc. Reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, Inc., New York]

### Maturity

The Greek philosopher Pythagoras divided human life into four equal parts: between one and twenty, one is a child, between twenty and forty, one is a youth, between forty and sixty, one is a *human being*, and between sixty and eighty, a human being on the downgrade. After eighty, the sage asserted, one does not really belong to the living, however many more years he may continue to exist. Pythagoras himself died prudently at seventy-five, had he lived to, say, ninety-five, he might have revised his views. But apart from the rather arbitrary limits, Pythagoras's opinion that man has the best opportunities to realize his potentialities as a human being between the ages of forty and sixty seems strangely modern. Such views have been propounded as a new discovery in our times, the result of new factors which have entered into human life.

That the average life expectancy in civilized countries has increased by over twenty years in the past half-century means a revolutionary change in our attitude toward old age and the possibilities of life. This increase, as everyone knows, has not come about because some individuals now reach an extreme old age, nonagenarians and centenarians appear to be just as rare, if not more so. But infant mortality has decreased tremendously, while vitality has been extended so that what used to be regarded as maturity is now regarded as mere youth, and the years that a couple of generations ago were part of old age are now considered part of maturity, when one's work at last reaches full quality and one can be truly human.

As always happens in times of great change, we have been confused and unaware of the opportunities the change offers. We scarcely know what to do with these twenty or twenty-five years. Science and a better social organization have combined to give us. And things we do not know what to do with are badly used. Too many hale and hearty oldsters have merely made life unpleasant. It became fashionable to praise youth as especially precious. Whole nations which used to boast of their hoary antiquity blossomed out as "young" peoples. Fascism and Nazism bear the stamp of the appeal to youth's least attractive qualities, stupid uni-

formity and group vitality And there was a while—I myself lived through it—when callow, stupid, middle-aged people filled the bars and dance halls, drinking, dancing and flirting greedily, obviously without understanding the meaning of life or having any idea of what happiness is A new war was in the offing, and war is a manifestation of the power of youth

We have all had to pay dearly for this mistaken worship of youth, among other things, it has led to the mass slaughter of youth It is devoutly to be hoped that the world of the future will be one in which adults are in the majority, a world dominated by men and women of forty and older who not only are fit for work, mentally and physically effective, but have become wiser, richer in mind, and warmer of heart Perhaps they can create a happier world, not only for youth but for everyone Our hope must be that the new world will be marked by *adults*, not merely those who belong to a certain older population group but those who are regenerated and truly mature, independent individuals with personalities of their own who have learned the meaning of happiness

There is a period of transition and crisis between youth and full maturity It usually occurs at the end of the thirties or the beginning of the *forties* In contrast to the crisis of puberty, to which literature and art have devoted an almost overwhelming amount of attention, it has been ignored and concealed to a surprising extent And yet it is as important to happiness as is the crisis of puberty, its nature must be understood and the right means of facing it taken Many people between forty and fifty will not realize that there is such a crisis of transition, and if they maintain that they have not noticed anything, they are not always deliberately lying, often they have not understood what it is or what it implies But nature refuses to be deceived If we want to adapt ourselves so that nature becomes our ally, we must be aware of what nature wants, otherwise we risk having to fight against nature, and that is always a losing battle

Those who are foolish enough to deny or to fail to understand this period of transition when the obvious symptoms appear will experience either of two things, both unpleasant They may take the attitude that *life has lost its zest forever, their happy youth* (which may not have been so very happy, after all) is over, and there is nothing left to do but vegetate They do not believe in the regeneration that is the aim and purpose of every period of critical transition Or they may refuse to admit that youth is over They still feel fit and strong, the only pleasures they know and understand are those of youth, and they continue them hysterically—even force themselves to be “younger” than youth itself

This struggle does not lead to happiness. In the first place, to be young is a condition and not an ideal In the second place, the struggle toward

this false ideal does not mean development and the release of instinctual energy but the very opposite. In periods of transition the important thing is that the instincts change, some die out and others appear for the first time, all as a direct result of changes in glandular activity. The sexual instincts change character and strength, new instincts which encourage greater depth, seriousness, concentration, and quality arise. If this new and changed instinctual energy is misused, is directed wrongly, ability diminishes and happiness fails. The bellicose instinct, which is strong and vital in youth, decreases or disappears. The same man who marched off to war happily and enthusiastically in his youth will now regard military service as an imposition or a heavy and cruel duty. It is painful to watch grown men playing the part of war-intoxicated youths, whether they do so from hypocrisy or plain stupidity.

The wise man will understand what is happening when he notices the first symptoms of the crisis, among which are a violent decline in the happiness potential, the lack of ability to experience happiness, the narrowing and dimming of the spectrum of happiness. And he will take the proper precautionary measures. The wise man understands (usually instinctively, since this is wisdom he has not learned in school or from books) that the crisis can lead to a new unfolding of life, a surer and greater capacity for happiness than man can gain in any other period of life.

We all know the miserable men who realize that youth is over but who cannot comprehend that they are face to face with a rebirth. To be sure, they may continue to sit at their desks and attend to their routine work, and spend their vacations at the usual place—for such people are usually creatures of habit—and “enjoy their leisure,” but in reality they are walking corpses. Youth is dead in them, but nothing new has sprung up to take its place. They are the ones who are apt to stand in the way of a younger generation, even though their long experience enables them to do their work fairly satisfactorily. Petty, bureaucratic, conservative in the worst meaning of the term, they are a harmful brake on the wheel of progress. They are not so much unhappy as they are joyless and tired of life.

There are women like them. They realize that they are no longer young, and they have never regarded woman's charm as anything more than that of the blooming girl and the young mother. They may be wives with big homes but no children in them, and they have nothing to do. They cannot make up their minds to get rid of a house that is too big for them because they lack the capacity to begin something new. Sex disappears, and because they lack Eros love vanishes too. They expect constant attention as compensation and display obviously their feelings of vanity. They plague and scold their husbands, whom they perhaps hate.

They interfere with morbid zeal in the lives and affairs of their sons and daughters, especially their daughters in law, often they take up religion, in a basically irreligious way

Those who refuse to admit to themselves that youth is past and stubbornly continue to try to be younger present an even less attractive spectacle, one which finally becomes pitiable. The men usually go through a period of spruces. In their fear of impotence, a fear which is usually without a physiological basis, they bring it upon themselves by playing the satyr. Since they are likely to be handsome, well preserved men with plenty of money, they are extremely attractive to women of a certain type. Sexual overstrain combines with too much hard liquor to bring about the impotence they fear. The next phase is more repulsive, they try to hide their impotence under the pretense of even greater sexuality.

In their work these men are correspondingly hectic, but they lack real energy. As bosses they chase after cheap popularity and are constantly on the lookout to show off their youthfulness. They press their subordinates and colleagues for ideas, which they steal because they have ceased to have any of their own. They are desperately enterprising, to all appearances, actually they are feverishly covering up their weakness. They hate young people, and they refuse to give up their power even when defeat is evident. When things have gone that far, the game is about up, typical examples of these "youthful" adults frequently commit suicide or break down completely.

What sort of person is the one who has understood and successfully passed this crisis?

The body can be kept in good condition through proper care and exercise. In nine cases out of ten physical decline is a sign of moral decline and intellectual apathy.

In the years between the two world wars the press of the world was flooded with an especially obtrusive advertising figure, the man of fifty who jumped over the grand piano, raced with his dogs, chased around with the girls. Yet in his obtrusive way this rather awful creature brought a real message to mankind, especially to those reaching middle age.

"Keep your bowels in order!" The advice is as important as it is prosaic, nothing makes a man more irritable than constipation and all it leads to. Those who are offended at the idea of the bowels having anything to do with their capacity for mental and spiritual happiness should read Aldous Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza*, especially the episode in which the forty-three-year old Anthony Beavis meets the doctor and sage James Miller in Mexico. The first thing Miller proposes to do to make a man out of Beavis is to clean out his colon! And yet his primary purpose is to achieve the salvation of his soul.

But often health is better than in youth, even if the body is no longer

quite so suited to violent exercise. The peak of performance is past, but the mind is sound. Youth's frequently trite beauty yields to another kind of beauty which tells about character. Those who become ugly as they grow older only reveal the external marks of a corresponding character. Baldness and gray hair, both of which may come early, are not always unattractive.

The function of the endocrine glands changes and usually slows down. Youth's ravenous appetite turns into appreciation of well prepared food. The mature man may be a connoisseur of good foods and wines, but if he is simply a trencherman there is something wrong. His body does not require even half so much as it did when he was young, and dieting is frequently a good thing. The healthy retain their full sexual powers, but here too the ravenous and crude appetite yields to the pleasure of moderation and refinement. While the animal feelings decrease, the sense of comfort increases.

The change that comes over the woman during the menopause—although it need not occur until she is well along in years—has been given a grossly exaggerated importance according to all modern scientific studies. In reality the menopause means merely that nature now relieves her from having more children, so that she can devote her energies to other things. She can now be her husband's friend and helpmeet to a greater extent than before and can successfully meet the task of being a wise mother of half grown and grown children. But superstition about these things is partly accountable for making the menopause a period of fear and neurosis. The woman has been afraid of losing her capacity for sex, and that has quite naturally led to much that is bad—phlegmatic resignation or, what is worse, the desperate attempt to prove to herself and others that she is still a woman. But the mature woman who understands the crisis and overcomes it becomes a delightful person, even sexually in the basic meaning of the term, one who can give her mate and herself the highest happiness of love. She is more womanly than she was as a girl because she has more to give.

Mentally both sexes undergo corresponding changes. Common sense, now backed up by fuller experience, gradually reaches its highest level. The ability to learn decreases, but what one learned in youth remains and now one can use it more effectively. What were mere fragments of knowledge now unite to give a picture, mature man knows how to integrate life's riddle. A comprehensive view of life emerges which can attain to wisdom. The remarkable quality that we call understanding, the ability to put oneself in the place of others and understand their motives, attitudes and feelings, reaches its peak toward the end of the years of maturity. Mental work is easier, especially when one has employed his youth acquiring the elementary intellectual processes. The special skills acquired

in youth remain, but to them is added perspective, the ability to see one's specialty in relation to other human mental activity

At the same time, the desire for more profound knowledge replaces youth's uncritical thirst for learning. One feels the urge to go to the sources, to read the fundamental works—if possible, in the original language—rather than be content with popularizations. One fine day you may well find yourself spelling your way through yellowed archives with renewed pleasure in research, just as technique is youth's typical interest, so history and genealogy are typical hobbies of mature men and women.

The enjoyment of outdoor life tends to increase with maturity, while pleasure in competitive sport wanes, since it is bound up with the fighting instinct. It is no longer hard to be a "good loser." The feeling for nature increases along with the appreciation of art. "The longer I live the more I enjoy nature and Charles Dickens," Richard Birkeland once said to me, when he was rector of the University and one of the busiest men in Norway. Since he was not a strong man, he had learned the art of concentration and penetration and he managed to accomplish the incredible, without ever fussing or being in a hurry.

It is characteristic of the emotional life of mature people that they also accept sorrow as a valuable element in life. A Danish friend wrote to me on the occasion of his mother's death, "I refuse to accept the stupid consolation of well-meaning people that time heals all wounds. I want to mourn for her until I die myself, just as strongly as I do today." That is the reaction of a mature man. Sorrow is just as much a gift of life as joy and it, too, must be lived to the full.

The will in the mature person has become something natural, an expression of his very personality. It has lost youth's frenzy and no longer finds violent expression in what may be desperate deeds, it is always present, but little in evidence—a hidden force which directs all our deeds. Of course the mature adult can also commit unpremeditated acts, let himself be carried away by his temperament. But the will, the personality integrated by the dominant ideal, at once takes the wheel with a firm and steady hand and brings him back to his course—if not the same course, at least one relatively close. In such a person the whole mind, understanding, emotions, and will are coordinated in a harmonious entity.

In order to emerge safely as a mature adult from the inevitable sufferings and storms that mark this transitional period, one must have built up outside of his personality a sanctuary, a home for Eros, a soul. The man without a soul will come out of the crisis an older and different person, whether he accepts the change or not, but he will be no more mature than he was, he will not have gone through a regeneration. It is the forces of the soul that are at work in a man as he struggles through the



crisis without losing hold of himself. The bodily changes make the mind unsure and unstable, everything seems to slip and the very foundations of life to give way. Then one feels that something outside takes over, takes the lead. One asks, 'Who are you?' And a voice which comes both from deep within one's self and from the farthest reaches of the universe answers, "*I am your self*." No, it is not the subconscious, not the emotions nor the will that speaks, it is the soul, one's religious 'I' which reveals itself at the high point of the crisis.

The experience may appear in many different guises and be described in many different ways, but it is there. The mature man, the true adult, is the man who realizes that he has a soul. He knows that there is something outside the body and mind which must be preserved and developed at any price. Only when a man or woman is genuinely grown up does he realize what it means to gain the whole world at the cost of his own soul.

The ideal of the mature man does not change as that of the youth does, it develops and matures along with him. The ideal of comradeship is no longer a sufficient guide through this crisis, it is no longer enough to be a number—one more man in the ranks, that no longer satisfies. Neither is it sufficient to aim at becoming a film star, a crack athlete, a business magnate, a successful author, or to out Casanova. Casanova. The ideal of the mature man is humanistic, to realize his humanity in its highest perfection. But since he realizes his own imperfections and how many barriers there are between him and his goal, he does not let his ideal hang like an unapproachable moon above the mountains but attempts rather to realize his potentialities through *approaching* the ideal, and then the ideal may be moved a little nearer at every step.

The mature adult should be forever through with the illusion that success is happiness. And this determines his attitude toward his work. For the first time, perhaps, he approaches his job with a new and different sense of values. When he was young he was primarily preoccupied with his career and the possibilities his work offered for advancement and better pay. But in the transition to genuine adulthood he asks himself, "What is the value of what I am doing? What use and pleasure does it bring to me, to others, to society, to mankind at large?" The stocktaking is perhaps harder and more serious than the one he takes for his sex life, but it is often closely bound up with it. From time to time a mature man shocks and surprises his friends and acquaintances by breaking off his career, renouncing to others the power he has struggled so hard to attain, leaving a good job with promise for the future, and beginning something completely new. He has chosen happiness at the cost of success.

This choice between happiness and success confronts the artist above everyone else. The day comes when he feels queasy at the thought of having to do his best in an art which he practices in order to earn money,

win the critics' applause, or to maintain a reputation. So he takes a different tack, begins anew. And the new beginning sometimes ruins him. But it sometimes gives him the chance to experience a kind of success which gives him happiness of a very different sort, because he is at last free to put his whole personality into his art. Such success is evidence to him that his art is genuine, it is a victory for his artistic personality, his will, and his development toward his ideal. We have a classic example of this in the celebrated French author Paul Bourget. Very early he made up his mind to be as renowned as Balzac and spared no effort to achieve his goal, as long as he was young. But in 1889, when he was thirty seven—for Bourget matured early—he wrote what is beyond doubt his best novel, *Le Disciple*. It was a book destined to be a turning point in literature, since it opened the battle against barren intellectualism and ruthless naturalism. In the foreword to this novel, which deals pointedly with the problem of the author's responsibility to his reader, Bourget dissociates himself in touching words from all pursuit of success and fame. But, unfortunately, things went wrong after the success of this novel. His ability to make a successful transition from youth to maturity was not strong enough to endure success, and he became the victim of reaction and bigotry.

The artist is first able to make his full contribution when he becomes a mature man. No longer is he carried along by his physical vitality, it becomes a question of his integrated personality and his soul. We see everywhere the example of the promising young artist who fails to live up to his promise when he no longer has the charm of youth and youth's surplus energy to bear him up. We also see examples of artists who have struggled all through their youth and well into mature life without accomplishing anything significant, only then to produce masterpieces which awaken the admiration of the age and of posterity and give mankind something of real value. The juvenile on the stage can develop into a character actor, the clever journalist and writer of light verse may ripen into an author of merit, quite conventional young painters and sculptors may mature into genuine artists.

The mature man also shows a natural development in his pleasures and recreation. He gradually relinquishes those forms of social life, sport, and outdoor life which take without giving, he cultivates more enthusiastically instead all those which develop the personality. The mature man does not fear loneliness. He often enjoys amateur gardening and "cultivates his garden" as Voltaire recommends in *Candide*. But if we are to mention one single form of recreation which is particularly characteristic of the intellectually mature person it is the art of conversation.

There is a story of Georges Clemenceau when he was Minister of War visiting the front line trenches. Suddenly the shrapnel began to fall

thicker and thicker about him. A young officer begged him to take shelter, but the old man of the world replied. "Take shelter yourself, young man. You still have many joys to live for. It's quite different with me. Even the art of conversation is beginning to pall." It is no accident that France is the country that has raised conversation to a fine art, since France is the land of mature people par excellence. In a country whose language is in transition, as in Norway and America, one of the reasons for the neglect of the art of conversation is that the language itself is still an imperfect instrument.

The fully mature man or woman will not strain to be original, but neither will he be afraid of being different from other people, since the full development of the personality brings with it a distinctive stamp. Hence mature people instinctively dislike uniforms and marching. The fact that the German people allowed themselves to be deprived of all individual personality, treated as a mass, and permitted Hitler to put them into uniform indicates that mature individuals must have been more uncommon and less influential than one might expect in a civilized country.

Mature people thrive best in a mature cultural environment and themselves create one. In times like these and those to come, when the world is in a process of transformation, the mature people will suffer most and sacrifice more than any others. But they will also find a certain grim pleasure in assuming the burdens and making the sacrifices which they must make.

The touchstone of the mature person is his sense of responsibility. On that account the mature man, regardless of his political theories, is always democratic in the true sense of the word. He assumes responsibility for those beneath him, but he faces without fear or subservience those who are over him. And the mature man must pay for his increased capacity for happiness with the suffering that accompanies this feeling of responsibility, with grief at stupidity and antisocial attitudes, with the bitter feeling of impotence at spiritual infantilism.

There is an ironical truth in Hitler's and Mussolini's calling the Axis powers the "young" states. In them the principle of responsibility is reversed, one has responsibilities only toward those above but is privileged to behave despotically and arbitrarily toward those below, just as irresponsible youth likes to be treated and to treat others. Hence the "young" dictatorial states, which are really throwbacks to ancient times, do not appeal to mature people. If mature man is to win peace, this can come about only through democracy, which, in all its various guises, will be the leading principle in all countries which reject immaturity and barbarism.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. Summarize Brochmann's evidence for what he calls "this mistaken worship of youth."
2. What are the characteristics of the "transition between youth and maturity"?
3. What are the distinctive values Brochmann associates with the state of maturity as he defines it—the values more easily available to the "mature adult" than to "youth"?
4. Describe the mental attitude and spiritual state of the fully mature person as Brochmann defines him.
5. What is Brochmann's conception of the "sense of responsibility" of the mature person?
6. In constructing his article, what use does Brochmann make of the idea that a better world will require more mature people? At what points in the article does he refer to it?
7. Which of the following words best applies to the manner in which Brochmann's article is organized: *rigid, discursive, disjointed, conversational, straightforward*? Justify your choice.
8. State in one sentence what you consider to be the essence of Brochmann's article.

## FOR DISCUSSION

1. Of what use is it to understand when you are only twenty a conception of maturity that you can't fulfill completely until you are forty?
2. Do you think that wars can really be avoided if there are a great many mature people in the world? What conditions would be required?
3. Do you think that the world should be 'dominated' by men and women of forty and older?
4. Can a person achieve, considerably earlier than forty, some of the marks of maturity that Brochmann mentions? If so, which are likely to be the most easily attainable, and which least so?
5. What possible dangers (or advantages) can you see in shifting the present emphasis on the values of youth to an emphasis on the values of maturity as set forth by Brochmann?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. What will I be when I am fifty?
2. The totalitarian emphasis on youth
3. The most truly mature person I know
4. A woman's plan for life when her children are grown.
5. How to be happy in spite of being young

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## *Their Mothers' Sons*

### I THE MOTHER'S DILEMMA

Maturity is not an inborn trait, it is not hereditary. It is the result of early background, environment, training, and unselfish parental love.

Conversely, immaturity is caused by the lack of a good intelligent foundation in this business of living. It is not difficult to find basic reasons for immaturity. Often it is merely necessary to retrace the life of an immature person. Given the opportunity of having known, when he was eight to twelve years old, any one of the men who failed in his opportunity to serve in the armed forces because of neuropsychiatric tendencies, and, particularly, of having known his mother, a competent psychiatrist could have forecast with reasonable accuracy the boy's future immaturity. In the vast majority of case histories, a "mom" is at fault.

Every woman who bears children is confronted by a dilemma from which there is no escape. The dilemma is as old as the human race, yet its implications and its dangers are peculiarly a part of our closely knit modern civilization and its intricate social cultures. Upon the successful solution of the dilemma depends not only the welfare of a mother's children but, in a large part, the basic survival of the nation of which her children are to be the future citizens and statesmen. The solution is not easy and the stakes are high. No nation is in greater danger of failing to solve the mother-child dilemma than our own nation. No nation would have to pay as great a penalty as the United States for not solving it.

The future social behavior of a child has its beginning and is patterned in the conflicting sensations and emotions that arise from the early relationship between the mother and child. For the child, the mother is not only the great Dispenser of pleasure and love and the great Protectress, but also the source of pain, the ruthless Thwarting and Frustrating. So the dilemma of the mother is likewise the dilemma of the child. It is a delicately balanced conflict of clinging and rejecting and, depending on which

way the balance is tipped, the child either learns to meet successfully the larger give and take aspects of mature living or he doesn't. If the give-and-take capacity is not developed, the child will fail to adjust himself to his own life and to society. As a result, the child never grows up. He remains emotionally immature.

Weaning is as much a part of motherhood as is nursing. Taking away from a child is as important as giving to it. Rejecting and emancipating a child are as significant as clinging to it. Furthermore, these seemingly contradictory phases of motherhood belong to each other both in nature and in sequence.

A play would be incomplete and meaningless if it stopped at the end of the first act, or if the last act were given without the first. Likewise with the mother-child relationship. The phase of taking away from or the rejection of the child by the mother would not only be ineffective but also senseless cruelty unless it had been preceded by the clinging and protective phase. On the other hand, the child who has known nothing but protection and has only learned to take and not to give has been sadly defrauded by his mother—so badly cheated that it would have been better if he had never been born.

Within the limits of the sensory, emotional, and social motherhood relationship, there is in miniature each child's future. The world we live in drives a hard bargain in the business of giving and taking. It never gives of the largeness of its satisfactions, unless it receives an equally valuable deposit in the general social account. The adult who as a child was never taught to share and give and concede or to think and act independently can almost never learn to do so later in life. There is a tragic finality about childhood. Unfortunately, the vast majority of men and women are made or broken before the first ten years of their lives have been completed.

What happens to the child whose mother not only has failed to sever the emotional apron strings but often has not even loosened them? His natural gregarious instincts lead him to seek social relations with his fellow man. But, because he has only learned to take, he sooner or later is rebuffed. He becomes a bystander in the game of life—a sad, disillusioned and envious spectator. He cannot be a lone wolf, living apart from his fellow man. Few men succeed in doing that and he least of all. Psychologically, it would mean his eventual emotional annihilation.

What constitutes a mom? How does she differ from a mother? Fundamentally, a mom is not a mother. Mom is a maternal parent who fails to prepare her offspring emotionally for living a productive adult life on an adult social plane. A mom does not untie the emotional apron string—the Silver Cord—which binds her children to her.

Moms are just about as old as parenthood. For years in my practice I have seen moms and the sad result of moms. My work in the Army and

Navy, because it gave me the chance to study over a short period thousands of psychoneurotics, served to add to my case histories of moms

I look at mom without rancor or resentment and not without understanding. Mom is not of her own making. Various forces work together to produce her kind. The basic mosaic of her behavior in most cases was put together in her own childhood without her knowledge and without her consent. Furthermore, momism is the product of a social system veering toward a matriarchy in which each individual mom plays only a small part.

Outwardly, a mom is not distinctively marked. She may be fat or thin, tall or small, blond, brunette, or a redhead, or she may wear a halo of motherly silvered hair. She may be beautiful or uncomely, dress dashingly or dowdily. She may be a college graduate or she may not. She may be quite ignorant of Emily Post's dicta, or she may be gracious and charming.

However, she does have one thing in common—the emotional satisfaction, almost repletion, she derives from keeping her children paddling about in a kind of psychological amniotic fluid rather than letting them swim away with the bold and decisive strokes of maturity from the emotional maternal womb.

There is nothing stronger in this world than the child mother cohesion. A mother song in a bar or from the stage of the cheapest burlesque will bring lumps in the throats and tears to the eyes of the roughest and toughest men. For all of us there is a natural pull back to mother . .

## II MOTHERS AND MOMS

It would be an error to assume that there is a clear-cut line of cleavage between mothers and moms, between motherhood and momism. If being a mother is understood to be a function consisting solely of rigorously preparing a child for mature emotional and social existence, then fortunately there are no such mothers. Such a Spartan-like figure would be a grotesque anomaly and a caricature of true motherhood. No normal woman can produce a child, give it life and love, and nurture and protect it when it is a helpless infant without creating a close bond that never can be completely broken. This is as it should be.

Theoretically, a mom is a woman whose maternal behavior is motivated by the seeking of emotional recompense for the buffets which life has dealt her own ego. In her relationship with her children, every deed and almost every breath are designed unconsciously but exclusively to absorb her children emotionally and to bind them to her securely. In order to achieve this purpose she must stamp a pattern of immature behavior in her children. Such a pattern is entirely inconsistent with even a minimum degree of adequacy and satisfaction and completely excludes the possibility of living life in an adult manner. With such rigid criteria,

probably there are not many bona fide moms, although I have known a few women who have almost succeeded in reaching the summits of momism

Actually, in every mother, no matter how mature she may be, there are traces of mom. There should be. Likewise, in moms there are odds and ends and fragments of motherhood although sometimes they are ultra-microscopic. However, there is a deal of difference in the amounts of these ingredients in mothers and moms, and the driving forces which activate motherly and momish behaviors are as far apart as the poles.

The mature mother uses the emotional ingredients sparingly and wisely. Her major purpose is to produce a proper balance of give and take in her children, so that they may attain full statured personal and social maturity and lead reasonably constructive and happy lives. The immature and insatiable mom, on the other hand, uses the ingredients lavishly and unwisely, chiefly to bind her children with emotional coils. Being immature herself, she breeds immaturity in her children and, by and large, they are doomed to lives of personal and social insufficiency and unhappiness.

In her dealings with her children, the real mother mixes logic with her love and at every step attempts to lead her children into thinking for themselves. In matters requiring judgment in selection, whether it be clothes or opinions, the mother knows her children need guidance but in decreasing amounts and with the objective of increasing self-decision. After all, Mary who is fifteen can hardly have that very décolleté evening gown for her first party frock no matter how much she wants it. Neither can Ann who is only in her 'teens be indulged in the filmy, black-lace underthings that her heart desires.

Likewise, the real mother knows that the home should be an informal forum where the children's opinions will be listened to and discussed pro and con. Discussions so conducted that the child realizes that his parents are interested in his ideas often trim down wild and adolescent thinking, and leave the nucleus of a sound thought. Surprisingly often, a parental challenge to read this or that article or book is accepted.

A mother knows that a home in which children live should be comfortable and pleasant and supply their reasonable needs—a place where they like to bring other children and which other children enjoy visiting. There need not be many restrictions, but there must be a few regulations. To have the right kind of a home, it is not necessary to do as some moms do, letting the door mat symbolize a wishing rug, capable of granting every whim as soon as the door is opened.

Probably it rarely enters the mind of a mother—yet if she were questioned about it, no doubt she would reply honestly—that if there were the need for help and support, because of sickness or old age, she would feel entitled to it from her children. Unlike mom, however, she



would not permit her children to immolate themselves upon her altar of need, but would insist on disarranging the lives of her children as little as possible

A sensible mother would at once detect the artificial nonsense of the pollyanna mom with her unbroken circle of familial joy and harmony. She knows that children are adults in the making and, if adults never disagreed, contended, argued, and even occasionally quarreled, then they would eventually be at each other's throats to escape the sheer monotony and boredom of complete and unending concord.

Without being either pugnacious or devious, the mother knows how to interpose quiet, diplomatic intervention against unfair or oversevere criticisms of a child by the father or the other children. She does this difficult job simply and with due regard for the merits of the situation and for the personal rights of each member of the family. Her middle of the road policy avoids the risk either of dangerously inflating the child's ego or of plunging him into the depths of inferiority.

The mother permits her children considerable latitude of thought and behavior, but she realizes that the only time the "musts" and "must nots" of the world of adults can be learned is during childhood. It is obvious that there must be "musts" and "must nots." Not only must children brush their teeth, keep dental appointments, bathe, and do many unpleasant things, but also there are many alluring things they must *not* do.

Some moms reveal the immature markings of their motherhood by the constant exercise of unqualified and unexplained authority. More ensnare their children by letting them do practically anything they wish. The mother's "musts" and "must nots" are usually qualified and self-explanatory. The objective of mothers is to make an increasing reservoir of self-criticism and inhibition available against the temptation to impulsive behavior.

Irrespective of their physical endowments or the amount of intellectual information they have had opportunity to acquire, even though it is minimal, mothers could never be inconsequential addlepates or pseudo-intellecuals. Not that the mother sees any virtue for herself or her children in being drab or dowdily dressed. Not unlikely, she subscribes to the code of the "hair-do," cosmetics, and other beauty aids which modern life have made almost mandatory. The mother, too, does not believe that the functions of motherhood include being a dumbbell. On the contrary, generally she informs herself as fully as circumstances permit and she is likely to be able to present her opinions in an interesting way. While she may give little or no conscious thought to it, the mother in considerable degree is activated by the fact that constantly she is mirroring a reflection for her children, a detailed portrait revealing

every asset, but also every imperfection, and covering a wide surface from physical appearance and grooming to mental agility. Unlike the reflection mirrored by the mom, too often a trap which confines the child's future and circumvents his emotional choices in life, the mother portrait is undeliberate and natural. As the child grows older, the portrait merges into rapidly increasing personal contacts and is progressively modified. There remains a nucleus or essence which serves as a useful starting point and lessens the child's danger of making immature and crippling emotional alliances in adult life. The reflection of the mom binds children, the likeness of the mother unleashes them and beckons them on to emotional and social emancipation.

Guarding the health of their children is difficult for mothers. Many moms solve it easily by intoning an endless litany of warnings about everything from overshoes to vitamins. The mother either knows or senses the danger of ingraining too deeply a pattern of oversolicitude about health and physical processes. Neurasthenia is an oddly shaped piece which will not fit into the jigsaw puzzle of life. The mother is seriously but sensibly concerned about the health of her children. She tries to inculcate normal common sense caution without impressing fears of sickness, accident, and death. Usually she succeeds in establishing a happy compromise. In obtaining such a compromise the mother does not hesitate occasionally to take minor chances by not always being too insistent about overshoes or nosedrops.

The mom regards the fence with which children surround their private thinking as a lien upon her emotional domain and tries to demolish it, the mother respects the privacy it incloses. Instinctively the latter knows that such mental territory should be sacred against trespass. No matter how vaporish, planless, and wildly romantic youthful thinking may be, still it is important in shaping emotional and social individualism and in promoting maturity. Should the private thinking become excessive and the child show increasing isolation from other children and the environment, the mother usually can find quiet, tactful ways of being let in on the secret.

The mother gives her children a reasonably sound and healthy sex perspective, without finding it necessary either to compose a paean to Eros or a hymn of sexual hate. Her own mistakes and disappointments are not permitted to distort the perspective. She does not visit her failures in sexual life upon her children. On the other hand, sex is not presented as unalloyed bliss exempt from responsibility or penalties for too much taking and not enough giving. The mother produces healthy attitudes more by her general reaction when the subject comes up casually, less and usually very little by studied and planned verbal instruction. She avoids pollyannaish aphorisms and soothing bromides. She does not

paint a precisely detailed picture, knowing that one person's sexual life cannot be modeled upon that of another and that the removal of spontaneity is destructive. Sex is not nakedly exposed. Enough of its inner veilings are left intact, so that later in life the child will have the satisfaction and the maturing value of making his own discoveries. The mother does not hope or wish to do more for her children than to give them sufficient honest information and the nucleus of receptive and favorable attitudes toward sex. This done, she may give them Godspeed upon their sexual journeys through life with the feeling that, at least, they will have an even chance of not stumbling too often or too seriously and of achieving mature sexual happiness.

Not so with many moms. Of all moms, probably the cruelest is the one who closes the door of her children's lives against the vista of normal and wholesome sex and fastens it securely with her silver cord. Unconsciously avenging herself for the disappointments, frustrations, and thwartings of her own sex life, ruthlessly she divests sex of all its beauty and makes it seem ugly and even loathsome. She may do this directly as she imparts "the facts of life" to her daughters and sometimes even to her sons. She would have it appear that men are lustful carnivora prowling about the world seeking females to devour. "So few men are considerate in that way." "They don't care to what they subject a woman or how they break down her health as long as they have their pleasure." "A woman must be constantly on guard."

With her sons mom varies the theme. "Girls are different these days," the implication being that they are very different from the kind of a girl mom was. Too few girls are sweet and modest. Deliberately and shamelessly they use their sex charms to trap unwary young men. "Before you know it, it is too late and you have wronged the nice girl you might want to marry some day."

Fair enough, but unfortunately, the "nice girl" is drawn to such meticulous specifications that the chances of finding her are somewhat remote. Even should he find a girl resembling mom's blueprint how can he be sure? She may be one of those female werewolves mom warned him about.

Contrary to the belief of some moms, the men in the armed forces, other than her son, were not sexually unclean. My contact with them in two wars has led me to conclude that, by and large, they were decent youngsters, basically clean minded. They did not wear their hopes, aspirations, and ideals about sex upon their sleeves and only rarely did they reveal them to their fellow soldiers. There was quite a little lusty sex talk when men were gathered together in encampments and on ships. So is there in civilian life. But the sex frightened youngsters listening to these discussions, somewhat Chaucerian in flavor, fascinated though

they were, still were likely to feel that their worst fears had been confirmed. Here was the proof of what mom had said. There was an ugly, writhing morass called sex.

So beginning with the mom, by a process of addition and subtraction—adding very considerably to the faint, vague mother stuff that is in her, subtracting liberally her extravagant interpretation of the protective function of motherhood and her gross distortion of it—we arrive at the mother. In her daily life she writes a visible text of living for her children. It is neither an exact nor a highly emotionalized text. Either would be hampering in adult life. The text is a frank one, setting forth the mother's liabilities as well as her virtues. For the children, it always remains a human document, alive and realistic. The life of the mother will never be slavishly imitated. Rather will it be used for comparative purposes. Some of it will be selected for use in adult life. Some portions will be discarded, either because they are not considered applicable or because the individual feels he can do better.

### III. MOMS IN PANTS

Yes, sometimes pop is a mom. The "joys" of momism are by no means reserved for the female of the species. Sometimes pop may be so much of a mom that he can only be distinguished by the fact that he wears trousers—in these days scarcely a sure mark of sex.

Again, usually the metamorphosis of the male parent into a mom also had its beginnings when he was a child and had a mom. As is the way with moms, she left him dangling on the limb of emotional immaturity in adult life. This was, indeed, a precarious perch, so naturally he reached out desperately for some source of strength and support. Even though he did not realize it, this was the principal motivation of his marriage.

Young women, and perhaps particularly young women who have the markings of fine and adequate wives and mothers, are rarely calm, dispassionate, and detached concerning marriage. Following the ancient biological law of the female, they are strongly moved emotionally. The maternal instinct is the potent driving force. The helpless immature type of male too often makes a deep appeal to such a woman's budding sense of maternity. Frequently marriage results from the mixture of these two elements.

Then the wife finds she has married a child adult. For a time the situation may be intriguing, but soon it begins to pall. Particularly is this true when children begin to arrive. They provide a much more satisfactory answer to the call of maternity than does a big hulking fellow of 25 or 30 who always wants to be babied. A thoughtful observer once remarked that a successful wife should be wife, mistress, mother,

and child, but the formula must be properly compounded. The role of rubbing his "poor, tired back" and endlessly soothing his ruffled feelings, that is, being his mom, is scarcely a substitute for the full contribution of the male to the marriage—as husband, lover, father, and child. So the immature husband, failing to find another mom in his wife, may engage earnestly in the business of being a mom to his children. Possibly it is the only available sop to his ego. For the wife who is trying sincerely to be a genuine mother, a mom for a husband poses a problem which can be solved only by increasing vigilance and thoughtful planning. The more firmly the wife-mother tries to anchor the children to the moorings of emotional and social stability, the harder the husband-mom seems to strive to pull them away into a whirlpool of emotional and social instability. Even when the wife is strong and determined, the husband is still the father of their children and therefore has a certain amount of nuisance value.

There are many techniques of being a male mom, all of them easy and pleasant. For instance, it is simple to curry the children's favor by never punishing them. Thus the mother acquires the reputation of being the ogress, the stern disciplinarian, while the father is thought of as "nice" and never "tough." If a mother is attempting to teach a child the value of money by having him manage his allowance and keep within it, the father can torpedo the effort by slipping the youngster extra dimes and quarters. The child will beam upon him.

The father may enact the role of mom by taking open issue with the wife in the presence of the children concerning some matter—let us say, the relative merits of preparing the next day's school lessons versus going to the corner drug store and playing the pin-ball machine. The mother is put between the devil and the deep blue sea. If she declines to accept the challenge the children take one backward step from maturity. If she accepts, there is the likelihood of a quarrel. Then, even if she triumphs, there is the danger that the children will feel that she is bullying the father, and this is particularly likely if he accepts defeat with "patient resignation." Above all things, children do not wish their mother to be a bullying female.

Like the female mom, the male one may be a past master in the momish art of using words sparingly and depending more for effect upon nuances of voice, bearing, gestures, and facial expressions. The children may come to him seeking an appeal from the mother's rulings. His words, "Maybe you should do as your mother wishes" may be fair enough, but his tired, patient voice and air of sad resignation speak all too plainly. "You know how it is. I understand and wish I could help you. I am sorry."

The male mom has an unusually good opportunity when before the children he succeeds in "needing" his wife into an expression of lack of sympathy for endlessly reiterated woes. Children cannot be expected to realize that their mother is for the moment tired from thinking, planning, and helping three or four normal children grow up and that for once the whining of a large, hopelessly immature adult child is more than she can stand. All the children see is the immediate picture "Poor dad, he is tired, his head aches, and his feet hurt, and mother is pretty tough about it." It is altogether likely that a half-grown daughter will steal softly to the couch and gently rub his head . . .

#### IV. SO SHALL WE REAP

The effect of mom and her activities goes far beyond the single individual or individuals that she dominates in childhood. Her effect is cumulative and far-reaching. William Ross Wallace put down no idle words when he wrote, "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world."

At the moment, the social portrait of man is very incomplete. Were it even half finished, the world would have scarcely embroiled itself in two bloody and destructive wars in the short space of twenty five years. Many cons must elapse and many additions and subtractions must be made to the portrait before man will merit the simple designation *homo sapiens*.

Each individual unit, each man and woman, you and I, may be symbolized by a circle. The circle, when it is complete, is the ideal—a human being in even contact with his environment. Each circle, representing one person, is surrounded by a series of concentric circles. The circles immediate to the personal circle signify the human being's personal rights—a very few sacred personal rights such as the right to protect and preserve his life, the right to bar unwanted intruders from his home, the right to worship God as his conscience dictates, the right to think independently though not always to carry his thoughts into action. There are a few really personal rights, but not many.

Beyond the limited group of circles of personal liberties, there are many more circles. They represent the rights we share with others. These circles overlap similar circles surrounding other individuals and are mutually held territory. Highly placed, or lowly placed, no one has more than a fractional claim upon this jointly occupied area. It is in this "give and-take" land—the overlapping of rights and responsibilities—that the fate of democracy will be decided.

The capacity to live democratically and constructively is acquired only in childhood. Only reasonably mature parents, and particularly

mature *mothers*, are competent to teach their children these lessons of democracy by permitting them to perfect their social instincts in their relations with other children. If the intermediate territory of "give and take" is populated with the sons and daughters of moms and their surrogates, then democracy cannot stand. It has happened elsewhere, it can happen here.

Even our highly prized and unwillingly relinquished personal rights sometimes must be modified, inhibited, and even yielded to others. Democracy means just that. Self-preservation is a dominant natural law, yet it must be tempered where others are concerned. If in war, during an enemy raid, there are no unoccupied fox holes, a soldier must not forcibly eject another soldier from a shelter and take his place. A sailor blasted into the sea from his ship by the enemy torpedo has no right to tear another sailor away from a life raft, in order to take his place.

And so it is with civilian living as well. We cannot advance ourselves at the expense of others, even if it is a case of "you or me."

[Giving,] not getting, is the basis of a happy, mature life and a true democracy. Moms, by not allowing their children to grow up under the give-and-take rules of existence, not only spoil life for their sons and daughters, but threaten the very foundation upon which our democracy is built, for the pattern laid down in childhood is followed throughout our lives.

When it is a question of privileges and favors to be obtained I suspect that the children of moms are in the majority in the forum of public opinion, with both arms extended. When it is a matter of obligations to be fulfilled, or unpleasant duty to be done, they are likely to be found gazing intently out of the window.

## V. HOW CAN WE HELP MOM?

What are we going to do about it? The problem is one of combating the cause rather than the effect. I'm afraid there's little that can be done for the older moms—their work is done. But we can make an effort to educate the mothers and fathers to be. Unfortunately, a full-fledged mom or pop is rather thickly insulated against education by the very conditions that made them what they are.

Repeatedly in the course of my professional life I have carefully explained to many women in the interests of their children, who were my patients, the dangers of momism. All in all, the results have not been too encouraging. In most cases, the impression I made on moms was neither deep nor lasting. It was not difficult to obtain agreement with everything I said, but unfortunately the business of being a mom is not one of thinking but of *feeling*, and feelings etched in deeply by years of practice are hard to eradicate.

Most moms are rather impervious to advice or criticism. Blinded by their "smother love," they simply cannot see that they are wrong and are harming their children.

The answer lies, not in revamping the moms, but in revamping the system.

For the welfare of the nation, it is high time that women and men should expect and should be expected to give evidence of fulfilling the obligations and responsibilities of parenthood. There is no reason why the institution of motherhood should not be investigated and evaluated just as any other institution, the Republican and Democratic parties, the medical profession, labor, or major league baseball—indeed any occupation or institution. The nation has a far greater stake in the occupation of motherhood than in any other. I trust that sometime in the not too-distant future it will no longer be necessary to approach the subject with soft and reverent tread and to inquire in a hushed voice how the business of motherhood is progressing.

I doubt if we will ever reach such a level of honesty that the Army will return to his mother a son who was inadequate and ineffective in military service, with a report like this: "We are returning your son to you. We cannot make a soldier of him. In fact, we do not believe anything useful can be made of him by anyone. If we kept him in the Army we would have to assign two good soldiers to coddle him. He has not changed at all. He is still as much a baby as when you nursed him and changed his diapers."

I doubt if it will ever be possible for a mature wife to return her immature husband to his mom with a note along this general line: "I am returning your son to you. I am afraid it was never intended that he should be a husband. I have three healthy, normal children and I intend to keep them that way. I cannot do this if I permit your son to stay in this house. Besides, the three children keep me busy and I do not have the time to look after another child. Your son is too old and too large to be a baby and as a child he is not very attractive. He cannot even play with the children because he is too easily offended. But you will not have any trouble with him. He misses you very much and I am sure he will be much happier with you than he has been with me and the children."

While we may never attain such frankness, yet if we succeed only in dispelling the atmosphere of sentimentalism which envelopes motherhood, then, at least, we may hope to arrive at a common sense level where praise will be given where praise is due and blame where blame is due, let the chips fall where they may.



## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. State in your own words the dilemma which, according to Dr Strecker, every mother faces
2. What does he say is the essential, basic cause of "momism"?
3. What should be the policy of a true mother with respect to the exercise of authority? As a model for her children? With respect to precautions regarding health? With respect to sexual information?
4. Describe the typical male "mom."
5. What is the line of reasoning by which Dr. Strecker shows a connection between the upbringing of children and the operation of democracy?
6. What does Dr. Strecker propose as the way to get rid of "momism"?
7. Which section does Strecker develop on the pattern of *comparison and contrast*? Explain how he does so, pointing out examples of comparison and examples of contrast.
8. Explain the function of the final paragraph of Section II, "Mothers and Moms"
9. Point out some of the metaphors Strecker has used (for example, "emotional apron strings," "the world we live in drives a hard bargain") Of what value are his metaphors in aiding communication?
10. How would you define Strecker's purpose in writing "Their Mothers' Sons"? Does he make explicit statements setting forth his purpose? If so, where?

## FOR DISCUSSION

1. Would taking children from their families at birth and raising them in nurseries prevent some of the evils of which Dr Strecker writes? What are the disadvantages of such a scheme?
2. Would drafting all boys into the service as soon as they are graduated from high school be a good way to deal with the problems caused by momism?
3. How can a college help to discourage the parents of students from inducing momism in their offspring?
4. Which of Dr Strecker's suggestions for destroying momism do you think would be most likely to succeed? Which do you think would be least likely to succeed?
5. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of an educational system in which "there shall be no rewards for success and no penalties for failure"?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. Remote-control momism in college
2. The proper way to raise a boy who will enter military service
3. Are boys or girls more subject to momism?
4. Do's and don'ts for raising children
5. What to do for the person who has reached the age of adulthood without becoming mature

## *Chapter Fourteen*



Emotional  
Health  
and Good  
Personal Relations

KNOW THYSELF

SOCRATES

## Introduction

For about a century now there has been a notable acceleration of man's study of his own inner being—his states of mind and emotion that lie beneath the surface and require special modes of study to understand. The inner world of experience is being explored and charted, and few fields of art or knowledge remain without strong influence from recent discoveries about man's make up. The chief reason for this swift increase of understanding has been the application of the scientific method. The central branch of knowledge concerned has been psychology, a young science which has grown in part from medicine, but also in part from philosophy and literature.

The science of psychology itself has branched in a number of different directions: there are half a dozen prominent "schools," or theoretical approaches, in psychology, and there is psychiatry, the psychological side of the practice of medicine, which includes psychoanalysis as one of its techniques.

Psychology has also nourished a number of other fields of study, and has been in turn nourished by them. Prominent among these are sociology, "human relations," industrial relations, social welfare, education, vocational guidance, and a dozen other kinds of counseling, and several of the subdivisions of anthropology.

Scholars and workers in all these fields have important practical aims to help people achieve mental and emotional health as individuals, and also as participants in groups. Family life, business, teaching, politics, even the conduct of nations and of international bodies like the United Nations—all are areas in which human attitudes are important and in which the studies linked with psychology have a vital role to play.

The fact that psychology is important in so many fields should not lead us to think of it, however, as the only valuable approach to the understanding of man's inner being. Most of the deepest insights are still to be found in religion, art, literature, and philosophy rather than in psychology and allied fields of study. The human understanding in the "Great Books" of Western Civilization, and also of the Far Eastern, Indic, and Arabic Civilizations is more profound and comprehensive than almost anything found in modern psychology. Nevertheless, the

scientific approach has added much that older approaches could never have achieved, and has cast its findings in forms which can readily be used in the modern world

The disciplines linked with psychology possess great advantages in offering practical ways for dealing with specific problems of individuals in modern society. Not only scientists, doctors, and sociologists, but also ministers, priests, and rabbis, are drawing increasingly upon findings about our emotions and the way they operate.

Among the different schools of psychology there is some lack of agreement on theories, concepts, and nomenclature. Some of these divergences are basic, others are largely matters of words. (For discussions concerning this sort of difficulty, see the chapter "Language and Good Writing.") At any rate, most schools of psychology use obviously metaphorical language. In this respect psychologists are akin to literary men, especially poets. A Freudian psychologist, for example, thinks with such concepts as the "superego," a term which means something like "conscience," and refers to a part of one's psychic apparatus which stands somehow above his ego, or "I," and directs it. A psychologist of another school may deny that any such thing exists, or even that it has any use as a provisional concept. In spite of differences of theory and terminology, however, the gentlemen of all schools are accomplishing a great deal for mental and emotional health. Eventually the constant process of discovery, argument, and revision of theories will reconcile the important differences, though it is probable that the metaphorical cast of psychological terms will remain, simply because metaphor is usually the only means of describing new things.

The selections are intended to give you a little of the background for understanding, as one writer puts it, "why we behave like human beings." These articles have been chosen to emphasize some of the ideas that are helpful to people in getting along with others, both as individuals who need to get along with other individuals, and as members of groups which need to get along with other groups—even such large groups as whole nations.

In the first article, "What People Have to Work With," Dr. Eric Berne, a practicing psychiatrist, begins by explaining a recently developed theory that different kinds of temperament are associated

with certain types of bodily build. Then he describes human beings as energy expending "structures" controlled by the glandular system and the brain, and finally he sets forth the theory that our mental images account in large part for our actions.

The second selection, "Even Dogs Get Neurotic," was written by Dr. David Fink, who began his career as a professor of sociology and later took an M.D. degree and became a psychiatrist. He describes one of the basic discoveries of psychology, the "conditioned reflex," which was first demonstrated by Pavlov in his famous experiment on dogs. Dr. Fink describes the theory that certain ills are caused by the collision of opposing "habits" of mind and body. His article covers some of the same phenomena of behavior as Dr. Berne's, but is based on a different theory.

In "Barriers and Gateways to Communication," Professor Carl R. Rogers, now Executive Secretary of the Counseling Center of the University of Chicago, and a specialist in psychotherapy in counseling, applies his experience with individuals and small groups to the problem of effective communication and mutual understanding between larger groups and between nations. His article offers some very useful ideas, applicable to situations that everyone is sure to encounter.

Finally there is the article "Zest" by the eminent British philosopher Bertrand Russell. His interest is not in psychological theories but in good old fashioned reasoning from everyday evidence that anyone can observe—though few can reason as clearly or as entertainingly as he does. Lord Russell believes that if we are to live with zest we must be free of inner conflicts that arise in us—and in this he is in agreement with the psychologists.

## ERIC BERNE

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## What People Have to Work With

### 1. CAN PEOPLE BE JUDGED BY THEIR APPEARANCE?

Everyone knows that a human being, like a chicken, comes from an egg. At a very early stage, the human embryo forms a three-layered tube, the inside layer of which grows into the stomach and lungs, the middle layer into bones, muscles, joints, and blood vessels, and the outside layer into the skin and nervous system.

Usually these three grow about equally, so that the average human being is a fair mixture of brains, muscles, and inward organs. In some eggs, however, one layer grows more than the others, and when the angels have finished putting the child together, he may have more gut than brain, or more brain than muscle. When this happens, the individual's activities will often be mostly concerned with the overgrown layer.

We can thus say that while the average human being is a mixture, some people are mainly "digestion minded," some "muscle-minded," and some "brain-minded," and correspondingly digestion-bodied, muscle-bodied, or brain-bodied. The digestion-bodied people look thick, the muscle-bodied people look wide, and the brain-bodied people look long. This does not mean that the taller a man is the brainier he will be. It means that if a man, even a short man, looks long rather than wide or thick, he will often be more concerned about what goes on in his mind than about what he does or what he eats, but the key factor is slenderness and not height. On the other hand, a man who gives the impression of being thick rather than long or wide will usually be more interested in a good steak than in a good idea or a good long walk.

Medical men use Greek words to describe these types of body build. For the man whose body shape mostly depends on the inside layer of the egg, they use the word *endomorph*. If it depends mostly upon the middle layer, they call him a *mesomorph*. If it depends upon the outside layer, they call him an *ectomorph*. We can see the same roots in our

English words "enter," "medium," and "exit," which might just as easily have been spelled "ender," "mesium," and "ectit."

Since the inside skin of the human egg, or endoderm, forms the inner organs of the belly, the viscera, the endomorph is usually belly-minded, since the middle skin forms the body tissues, or soma, the mesomorph is usually muscle minded, and since the outside skin forms the brain, or cerebrum, the ectomorph is usually brain minded. Translating this into Greek, we have the viscerotonic endomorph, the somatotonic mesomorph, and the cerebrotonic ectomorph.

Words are beautiful things to a cerebrotonic, but a viscerotonic knows you cannot eat a menu no matter what language it is printed in, and a somatotonic knows you cannot increase your chest expansion by reading a dictionary. So it is advisable to leave these words and see what kinds of people they actually apply to, remembering again that most individuals are fairly equal mixtures and that what we have to say concerns only the extremes. Up to the present, these types have been thoroughly studied only in the male sex.

*Viscerotonic endomorph* If a man is definitely a thick type rather than a broad or long type, he is likely to be round and soft, with a big chest but a bigger belly. He would rather eat than breathe comfortably. He is likely to have a wide face, short, thick neck, big thighs and upper arms, and small hands and feet. He has overdeveloped breasts and looks as though he were blown up a little like a balloon. His skin is soft and smooth, and when he gets bald, as he does usually quite early, he loses the hair in the middle of his head first.

The short, jolly, thickset, red faced politician with a cigar in his mouth, who always looks as though he were about to have a stroke, is the best example of this type. The reason he often makes a good politician is that he likes people, banquets, baths, and sleep, he is easygoing, soothing, and his feelings are easy to understand.

His abdomen is big because he has lots of intestines. He likes to take in things. He likes to take in food, and affection and approval as well. Going to a banquet with people who like him is his idea of a fine time. It is important for a psychiatrist to understand the natures of such men when they come to him for advice.

*Somatotonic mesomorph* If a man is definitely a broad type rather than a thick or long type, he is likely to be rugged and have lots of muscle. He is apt to have big forearms and legs, and his chest and belly are well formed and firm, with the chest bigger than the belly. He would rather breathe than eat. He has a bony head, big shoulders, and a square jaw. His skin is thick, coarse, and elastic, and tans easily. If he gets bald, it usually starts on the front of the head.



Dick Tracy, Li'l Abner, and other men of action belong to this type. Such people make good lifeguards and construction workers. They like to put out energy. They have lots of muscles and they like to use them. They go in for adventure, exercise, fighting, and getting the upper hand. They are bold and unrestrained, and love to master the people and things around them. If the psychiatrist knows the things which give such people satisfaction, he is able to understand why they may be unhappy in certain situations.

*Cerebrotonic ectomorph* The man who is definitely a long type is likely to have thin bones and muscles. His shoulders are apt to sag and he has a flat belly with a dropped stomach, and long, weak legs. His neck and fingers are long, and his face is shaped like a long egg. His skin is thin, dry, and pale, and he rarely gets bald. He looks like an absent minded professor and often is one.

Though such people are jumpy, they like to keep their energy and don't fancy moving around much. They would rather sit quietly by themselves and keep out of difficulties. Trouble upsets them, and they run away from it. Their friends don't understand them very well. They move jerkily and feel jerkily. The psychiatrist who understands how easily they become anxious is often able to help them get along better in the sociable and aggressive world of endomorphs and mesomorphs.

In the special cases where people definitely belong to one type or another, then, one can tell a good deal about their personalities from their appearance. When the human mind is engaged in one of its struggles with itself or with the world outside, the individual's way of handling the struggle will be partly determined by his type. If he is a viscerotonic he will often want to go to a party where he can eat and drink and be in good company at a time when he might be better off attending to business, the somatotonic will want to go out and do something about it, master the situation, even if what he does is foolish and not properly figured out, while the cerebrotonic will go off by himself and think it over, when perhaps he would be better off doing something about it or seeking good company to try to forget it.

Since these personality characteristics depend on the growth of the layers of the little egg from which the person developed, they are very difficult to change. Nevertheless, it is important for the individual to know about these types, so that he can have at least an inkling of what to expect from those around him, and can make allowances for the different kinds of human nature, and so that he can become aware of and learn to control his own natural tendencies which may sometimes guide him into making the same mistakes over and over again in handling his difficulties.

## 2 WHERE DOES HUMAN ENERGY COME FROM?

In order to understand anything in this world, we have to ask first, what parts does it consist of and how are they put together, and secondly, where does its energy come from and how is it conducted into the proper channels. To understand an automobile, we must first describe the various parts and where they are, and then see how the energy of the gasoline is changed into rolling motion through the workings of the mechanism. To understand a frozen water pump, a moaning radio, an inspiring comet, a fair waterfall, a growing tree, or an angry man, we must follow the same course. The construction is called *structure* and the working is called *function*. To understand the universe we study its structure and function. To understand an atom we study its structure and function. Then we can navigate a ship, and make an atom explode.

We have seen that in structure the human being consists of three kinds of tissue and that the way these are put together will partly determine how he acts and reacts. If we now study the glands and the brain, we shall have the beginnings of an idea as to how the energy of a human being is controlled as he functions.

The energy of man comes from food and oxygen, as far as we know. The amount of food he eats, together with the amount he has stored in his body, determine the amount of energy he can release by means of oxygen. The result of digestion is to change the food into fairly simple substances which can be stored and used as required, to release energy by changing chemically. Vinegar and baking soda fizzing in a glass produce heat, which is energy. In a more complicated way, body chemicals and oxygen fizzing in the body produce heat, so that a certain amount of food produces a certain number of calories of energy for the body to use. How this heat is changed into the kind of energy needed by the body is not yet clearly explained.

We can recognize human energy in two forms: bodily energy and mental energy—just as we can recognize that the energy used in going for an automobile ride comes partly from the car and partly from the driver.

The glands have much influence in determining how fast bodily energy is used and for what general purpose it is employed. The thyroid gland acts like an accelerator and keeps the individual running at high speed or low speed. It may keep him running faster than his food provides for so that he uses up all kinds of reserve chemicals, such as fat, to supply the energy needed, and thus a person whose thyroid is overactive tends to lose weight. On the other hand it may slow him down so much that he takes in more food than he can use, and the excess is stored as fat.

and other substances, so that the person whose thyroid is underactive may put on weight

If we compare the thyroid to an engine accelerator, we may say that the adrenal glands, which are found attached to the kidneys, are like rocket fuses. When we need an extra push, the adrenals release a sudden huge supply of energy. This happens usually when we have to fight or run, the adrenals are the glands which gird us for action when we are angry or afraid. Sometimes we are angry or afraid without being able to do anything about it, so that we are unable to use up the extra energy. Something has to happen to this energy and since the normal path of expression is blocked, it may exert itself on the muscles of the heart or other inner organs, causing pounding and other disagreeable sensations. In any case, the extra energy does not simply vanish, if it is not used up at the time by fighting or running away, or by palpitations of the heart or contractions of the other internal organs, it is stored up until it finds a chance to express itself directly or indirectly, as we shall see farther on.

Both the thyroid and the adrenals are set differently in different people. Because of their thyroids, some people are always on the go and some are always sluggish. There are other reasons for such differences in energy output besides the thyroid, but one always has to think of this gland in trying to account for restlessness or sluggishness. In the same way we have to think of the adrenals when the question of differences in excitability arises. Some people's adrenals are set on a hair trigger, so that their bodies are frequently in a state of turmoil, while others never feel the surge of strength that comes with profound anger.

The thyroid affects the total amount of the individual's activity, regardless of what he uses the energy for. The adrenals release additional energy to aid the individual in separating himself from things which threaten him or stand in his way, whether he accomplishes the separation by running, or by destroying the threatening force, or by causing it to leave in a hurry.

The sex glands also affect the output of energy, and like the adrenals the energy they release has the quality of supplying vigor for certain special purposes. We may say that the adrenals assist the instinct of self preservation by releasing added strength for separation or destruction. The testicles and ovaries assist the sexual instinct by giving added interest to certain constructive activities. Their earthy purpose is concerned with sexual union, but part of the energy they release can be usefully applied in any romantic or sublime activity which has the feeling of approach, affection, or creating.

In thinking about these glands, it should be understood that we have no right to say that they are the source of the energy and desire for creating and destroying, but they do serve in some way to give added zest

to such desires, and to release *extra energy* to accomplish them. Older people whose glands are wearing out can still create and destroy, but they usually do not have the same passionate excitement and concentrated energy that younger people do.

Furthermore, the glands have nothing to do with the special way the released energy is applied. For instance, the adrenals make the muscles of the arms and legs stronger and quicker, but they do not determine whether the limbs will be used for fighting or for running away. The sex glands make the individual feel strong and restless and increase the attractiveness of outside objects, especially other human beings, usually of the opposite sex, but they do not determine how he goes about getting closer to people, nor whom he chooses. With glands alone and no brain, a human being would show little more initiative than a bottle of fermenting wine. This can be shown by removing the outside parts of the brain from a cat. Under the influence of the adrenals, the cat will then go into rages with almost no provocation at all, and be prepared for violent action, but he neither knows the true object of his rage nor can he deal effectively with anything that really threatens him. He becomes steamed up but does not know how or against whom to act. The brain is necessary for effective action in accomplishing a definite purpose.

The energy of thinking and feeling is harder to understand than the energy of moving and little is known about its origin. It is known that energy is used whenever the mind is active, and it can be shown that the brain gives off electric waves and uses up oxygen. This may mean that the energy used by the mind is not completely different in kind from the energy used by the body, it may well be the same energy used in a different way. It can be shown experimentally that there is a difference in electrical pressure between the brain and the body, and between the different parts of the brain, and that these differences change when the mind is active. This shows that mental activity is accompanied by electrical changes.

A good deal of mind energy is used in doing nothing or rather in *keeping from doing things*. One of the main functions of the brain is to keep the individual's activities toned down, and prevent the rest of the nervous system from running wild, as it does in the cat without a brain. Keeping a firm grip on the lower nervous system requires energy, just as keeping in hand a team of restless horses does.

Mental energy is also required to keep certain ideas and feelings apart in order for the mind to remain tidy. If all sorts of ideas and impressions were allowed to run together without hindrance, the human mind would be as disorderly as a haystack. If ordinarily separated ideas or feelings are allowed to come together, as in jokes or embarrassing

situations, the energy formerly used to keep them apart is released, and can then be used for other purposes, for example, it may play a part in starting an explosion of laughter, tears, or blushing

In situations involving social prestige, for example, the feeling of respect which "inferiors" may have is usually kept separate, by the use of mental energy, from the feeling of resentment which such situations arouse. When the pent up resentment is allowed to express itself openly, the energy which was formerly used to keep it in check is released, and this in addition to the energy of the freed resentment may be enough to awaken a smile or a laugh on the part of the listeners.

This is illustrated by the case of the woman who got on a trolley car and refused to pay her fare. When the conductor insisted that she would have to pay or leave the car, the woman said haughtily

"You can't force *me* to pay. I'm one of the directors' wives."

The conductor was not impressed.

"I don't care if you're the director's *only* wife, you *ll* still have to pay," he replied, amid the smiles of the other passengers.

In this case the listeners sympathetically went through in their minds the same process of defiance and freeing of resentment as the conductor did in actuality. He used the energy thus freed for talking, they used theirs for smiling. Added to this in both cases was the energy released by bringing openly together the ideas of "wealth" and "polygamy." The laying open of these and other hidden connections freed blocks of energy which were used by the various parties concerned for laughing, smiling, talking, or expressing irritation.

We see, then, that our energy comes from the food we eat and the air we breathe, and that the glands play an important part in determining the vigor with which it is released and the direction which it takes, while the mind, in the end, determines the exact purpose for which it is used. If it is desired to change the amount or direction of a person's energy output, therefore, there are three points of attack. Changing the production of energy from food and air belongs to the field of internal medicine, and is a problem which arises in cases of heart, lung, and thyroid diseases, anemia, and so on. Changing the release of energy by glands is something we know little about at present, but which both the internist and the psychiatrist take a great interest in. The control of energy output by the mind is the problem of psychiatry and that is what we shall deal with in the rest of this book.

### 3 WHAT IS THE BRAIN FOR?

The brain is often not too accurately compared to a telephone exchange, because it is concerned in making connections between ideas, and between things that happen and what we do about them. Even in

this respect, the brain is more complicated than anything man could manufacture. There are more possible connections in one brain than there would be in a world switchboard if every living human being had a telephone. In addition, one part of the brain seems to be able to substitute for another in an emergency with more ease than would be possible with any man made switchboard.

The brain is enclosed in the top part of the skull. It is split part way down the middle and is about the size of a large coconut. The spinal cord is shaped like a thin cane with a knob on top of it. The brain surrounds this knob and is connected with it by a million little nerve cords.

People often wonder how much of the brain is really used, and how much of it one could do without. Sometimes the brain is injured before, during or after birth, and then we can answer these questions, for the injured part may liquefy after a while so that the brain substance disappears and a collection of watery fluid replaces it. It is amazing in such cases to see how much of the brain can be destroyed without the individual or his friends knowing that there is anything wrong. One man had several of these large pools of fluid inside his brain, so that from birth only about half of the tissue was left, yet he apparently went through high school normally, and was doing a good job as an auto mechanic at the time he came to see the doctor. The only reason he wanted medical attention was that he suddenly began to have epileptic convulsions. Until these began, neither he nor his family had suspected that there was anything wrong with him. It was only when he went to see a specialist that anything extraordinary was noticed. Because of certain small irregularities in his vision and muscle development, which had never interfered with his work enough for him to notice them, the neurologist took special X-rays, which showed up the holes in his brain.

Some parts of the brain have special uses, but other parts are capable of gradually replacing each other. If one of the special parts liquefies, the individual will not be able to carry on whatever function that part of the brain is concerned with. If one half of the rear end disappears, the individual will be unable to see one half of what is in front of him, and will be blind on one side (not in the right eye, for example, but in the right half of each eye). If both sides of the rear end liquefy, he will be almost completely blind. In some cases, the duties of even these special parts can be taken over by other sections of the brain. An apoplectic stroke, or shock, as it is sometimes called, is due to destruction of a part of the brain which controls certain muscles. When this portion is destroyed, the muscles stiffen and the individual is unable to control them normally. With long practice, however, other parts of the brain can often be taught to take over, so that some apoplectics regain control of themselves after a stroke. In the case of the mechanic mentioned above, it happened that

most of the destroyed brain tissue did not have any special function, so he was able to carry on normally

The reason so much brain tissue can be dispensed with is that the brain usually acts as a whole. In this, as in many other ways, it works differently from a telephone exchange. If some of the telephone exchanges in France were destroyed, there would be less telephone service in that country. But if a man learns the French language, that knowledge cannot be partly destroyed by destroying any special part of the brain, because he knows French with his whole brain and not with any part of it. There is no 'bump of languages' (There is an apparent exception to these statements in the complicated condition called 'aphasia,' which we need not go into here.) One might almost say that the absence of some parts of the brain no more interferes with knowledge, thinking, and other aspects of the mind than the absence of one leg does. Indeed, in real life, the latter often causes more mental symptoms than the former.

The brain should be regarded as part of the energy system which is a human being. If we look at it in this way, we may allow ourselves to suppose that the brain has another function just as important as being a sort of telephone exchange, and that is, to store energy. There is some evidence that this is actually what the brain does. We may remember in the case of the cat with the top removed from its brain, that the animal seemed to be unable to store any of its feelings, and gave way immediately to rage on the slightest provocation. Similarly, the animal was unable to store any memories of what had happened, and was unable to store the impulse to move its limbs when they were stimulated. In the case of human beings who have whole brains, the ability to store mental energy is highly developed. Normal adult people can store their feelings until it is more convenient to express them at some later time, instead of flying into frequent rages without restraint; they can store memories, and recall them later; they can store the desire to move their limbs in response to stimuli, as they must do in the dentist's chair. In rare cases it is necessary to cut off the front part of the brain in human beings for certain types of illness, and then we see things which lead us to believe that the individual is unable to store his feelings and impulses as well as he could when the brain was all there. After such an operation, the person will act more impulsively and show many of his feelings more quickly than he did before.

Many otherwise mysterious things can be explained if we suppose that it is a function of the brain to store energy. From this point of view, the brain is the organ of waiting.

One of the most important things in family and social behavior, and the relationships between human beings is the ability to store energy without distress when the individual's judgment tells him that it is ad

visible to wait before acting. If our supposition is correct, it is the brain which stores the energy released by the glands and other sources until the proper moment arrives, and in this way the storage capacity of the brain would play a part in preventing people from doing foolish things just because their tensions encouraged them to. We may even imagine the brain in everyday life being charged and discharged like a living storage battery, as illustrated in *The Case of the Ten Dollar Slap*.

Midas King, the owner of the Olympic Cannery, was a plump, fidgety, somewhat irritable viscerotonic. Things did not go smoothly in the cannery during the war. Everyone was working at top speed, the staff was continually changing, and mistakes, sometimes serious ones, were frequently made. The days were a continual series of annoyances to Mr. King, but he always tried to control himself at the office. He came to Dr. Treece for psychiatric treatment for high blood pressure.

Mrs. King, who accompanied him, told the doctor of an incident of the previous evening. Upon coming home from the office, Mr. King had seemed peaceful enough until their little three year old boy had done something bad, whereupon Mr. King had suddenly given him a terrible slap on the head. Mr. King had felt that he was justified, but his wife had told him he had gone too far, and had taken the boy in her arms and soothed him. The cause of Mr. King's burst of anger was that the child had torn a dollar bill into pieces. Mr. King now felt sorry for what he had done.

"I think I see the situation," said Dr. Treece. "The boy tore up a dollar bill, but instead of slapping him one dollar's worth, you slapped him ten dollars' worth, isn't that it?"

Mr. King and his wife agreed that that was a good description of what had happened.

"The problem is," said the doctor, "where did the other nine dollars' worth of annoyance come from?"

"Of course he brought it home from the office, poor dear," replied Mrs. King.

"His feelings got charged up at the office and discharged at home," said the doctor. "And now, after some years of this kind of thing his blood pressure doesn't come down after a restful weekend as easily as it used to. So we have to find out how he can keep from becoming so easily irritated during the day, isn't that it?"

We might remark here in passing that the child, like the criminal, learns what punishment to expect for any given misdeed. This amount of punishment he is often prepared to accept without holding a grudge. But if he is punished ten dollars' worth for a one dollar crime, he felt nine dollars' worth of resentment, since, inexperienced though he is, he never-



theless realizes somehow that he is being made a scapegoat for someone else's sins and resents this unfairness

This little example shows how the storage of energy and its manner of release are all important in keeping the body running smoothly, and in relationships with other people both at work and in the home. Besides feelings, knowledge and experience are also stored, in the form of memories. In mentally defective individuals there is not much ability for this latter kind of storage, so that morons and imbeciles do not learn easily, and having profited little from their previous experiences, their judgment is poor. The two kinds of storage are distinct. A man's ability to store knowledge has nothing to do directly with his ability to store feelings. That is why so many 'intelligent' people make such fools of themselves in their relationships with others, and is also partly the reason that being slow of understanding does not prevent a person from getting along with others. We admire people for their intelligence, but we like them for the way they handle their feelings. Those who wish to develop their personalities, therefore, must decide whether they want to develop one side or the other, or both. If they develop only their storage of memory images, they may be admired, but not necessarily liked. If they want affection as well as admiration, it might be of help to develop their ability to store their feelings and express them in an acceptable way.

While these are both things of the mind, the brain is probably the organ of the body most directly concerned. It is the organ of learning and waiting, which, we suppose, stores memory images and feelings, it is as well the central organ which deals with the connections between ideas, and with what goes on outside ourselves and what we do about it.

#### 4 WHY PEOPLE ACT AND FEEL THE WAY THEY DO

A person acts and feels, not according to what things are really like, but according to his mental image of what they are like. Everyone has images of himself, the world, and those around him, and behaves as though those images, rather than the objects they represent, were the truth."

Some images have the same pattern in almost every normal individual. The Mother is virtuous and kind, the Father stern but just, the body strong and whole. If there is reason to think anything to the contrary, deep down in their minds people hate to believe it. They like to continue to feel according to these universal images, regardless of whether they correspond to what is really there. If they are forced to change them, they become sad and anxious, and even mentally ill.

People's images of their own bodies, for example, are very difficult to change. A man who has lost a leg finds it hard to settle down until he has gone through a period of sadness or "mourning" during which he

succeeds in changing his body image to correspond to his new situation. Even then, deep down in his mind, he keeps his old image of himself. For years after he has lost his leg, he may see himself as a whole man in some of his dreams, and sometimes he stumbles because for a moment he forgets. These things show that his mourning has not been completely successful.

People's images of their parents are also difficult to change. In some dreams, the weak father may be strong, the drunken mother pure, and the dead still living. It is hard work to change an image when it has to be done, which is one reason that people hate to do it. If a loved one dies, the effort of changing one's mental image of the world to correspond to the new situation, which we call "mourning," is quite exhausting, and leads to tiredness and loss of weight. Oftentimes mourners, when they get up in the morning, are more tired than when they went to bed and feel as though they had done a hard night's work. The reason is that they have done a hard night's work, altering their mental images.

There are other images which belong only to certain individuals because of special circumstances, and these also are hard to change. "The phantom in the bedroom," the mental image of a man's first wife, may spoil his relationship with his second wife, the mother with her hand on the doorknob" is a mental image which may keep a woman from growing up emotionally even when she is far away from home, she always feels as though everything she did were being criticized by her absent or dead mother as if the latter were listening outside the room.

The story of Nana Curtisan illustrates another type of individual image which may persist and influence conduct after the reality has changed. Up to the time of her father's tragic death, Nana had been quite plump. Because she had no mother, and her father was a drunkard, she was starved for affection, and was willing to do anything to get it. As a result she got a very bad reputation, which distressed her, but she felt quite helpless to control her craving for male company, and because of her poor figure she had to go to extremes to obtain it.

After her father died, she lost a good deal of weight and her true figure emerged from its cushion of fat like a slender, graceful sculpture from a block of stone. Two of her old friends, Ralph Metis, the banker's son, and Josiah Tally, the cashier at the bank, were so dazzled by her new found beauty that they began to think of marrying her, in spite of her reputation.

Unfortunately Nana was unable to change her image of herself. In spite of what her mirror and her comrades told her, she continued to think of herself as a physically unattractive girl who had to go to extremes in order to gather affectionate garlands. She persisted in her previous conduct and the result was that with the assistance of the horrified parents of Ralph and Josiah, she lost her chance for a good marriage.

The story of Nana, who did not give up thinking of herself as "the homely Dryad," is just the reverse of that of many a middle-aged or elderly woman, who continues to believe that she is "the enchanting Sylph" of her youth, and acts accordingly, sometimes with pathetic results, and sometimes, by good fortune, with charming success.

Such mental images, which guide our behavior, are charged with feeling. When we say that we love someone, we mean that the image of that person in our minds is highly charged with constructive, affectionate, and generous feelings. When we say that we hate someone, we mean that that person's image is charged with destructive, angry, and hostile feelings. What the person is actually like, or how he appears to other people and how they feel about him, does not come into the picture except indirectly. We don't fall out of love with Pangyne and in love with Galatea, but out of love with our image of Pangyne and in love with our image of Galatea. All that Galatea does is make it easy for us to form a lovable image of her. If we are particularly anxious at the moment to fall in love, we help her along by picking out the lovable things to emphasize in our image, denying or neglecting the undesirable qualities. Thus it is easier for a person to fall in love "on the rebound" than it was in the first place, because when the image of his first love breaks down, it leaves an empty space in his mind with a large charge of feeling which is urgently looking for a replacement. Driven by the anxiety of the vacuum, he romanticizes the image of the next woman who comes along so that she can fill the niche quickly.

Though we like to cling to our images and are loath to alter them, over a period of time we do have a tendency to make them more romantic than a vanished reality. Old people think of the dubious past as "the good old days," and some long for home when they are away from it and are often disappointed in it when they return. Most people are glad to see old friends and old enemies after a forgotten interval, since they have softened the bad and emphasized the good in their images of them during their absence.

Hector Meads and his family were good examples of how people tend to make their images of absent things and people more romantic as time passes. Hector was the only child of Archie Meads, who owned the Olympia Garage. Through no desire of his own, Hector became an employee of the U. S. Government and was sent to a small island in the South Pacific. When he returned after twenty-nine months, he was restless, fidgety, irritable, and dissatisfied at home. He grumbled so much and seemed so strange that his mother, a nervous woman at best, became quite agitated from worrying about how to please him.

After six weeks of restless roaming around the house, listening to the radio, and drinking wine, he went to work for his father. He quit that

because he was unable to get along with the customers and with Philly Porenza, the mechanic with holes in his brain. He and Philly had been good friends before Hector went away, but now Hector complained that Philly was a loafer and didn't understand what life was really about. Hector also quarreled with his former girl friend, Ann Kayo, the police chief's daughter, and took to dropping over to Foamborne Street to see Nana Curtsan occasionally. He tried working at the Hotel Olympia, McTavish's Dry Goods, and the Depot Meat Market, but it was six months before he finally settled down to a job, in King's Lumber Yard. He was always finding fault with his boss or with working conditions. He was certainly not the easygoing boy who had left Olympia more than two years before.

What had happened was this: when Hector and his family had said good-by on his departure, they had each kept an image of what the other looked like. While he was away from home and lonely, Hector had often thought about his family, Ann, Philly, the garage, and various places around Olympia. He thought about the good things and the bad things too. As conditions grew worse and he became more lonely and uncomfortable on his little island, Olympia and its people had come to seem increasingly desirable to him. There were so many worse things on the island, that he had gradually forgotten all the bad things about Olympia. Home as he now remembered it seemed more and more romantic to him. He expressed these feelings in his letters.

The people at home went through the same sort of change. They all missed Hector and would often think how amusing and cheerful he was. They gradually forgot all the bad things about him, his thoughtlessness, untidiness, and carelessness about his work. They were touched by his letters, and their feelings became more and more romantic as the months slipped by.

By the time he was due to come home, Hector had a very exaggerated idea of how wonderful Olympia was, and Olympia had an exaggerated image of how wonderful Hector was. In both cases, the images were based on the way things were the day Hector left, with a lot of romance added.

In the meantime, of course, both the real Hector and the real Olympia were changing. Hector saw a lot of trouble over there on his little island, and he was no longer just a trying but lovable boy who liked women to fuss over him. He was thoughtful and self-reliant, and a man among men. Olympia had seen trouble too, and was no longer just a sleepy little village, but a town among towns. Ann was grown up and sophisticated, though still kind and beautiful, his parents were a little older and a little more set in their ways. Philly Porenza had turned a little sour on the world after he had started having convulsions.

When Hector returned, both he and the townspeople were shocked. Both thought they were prepared for changes, but their images of each other hadn't changed the way the realities had; in fact they had changed in the opposite direction, if anything. Their new images were so far from the new realities that even with the best will in the world they couldn't get used to each other at all for about six weeks.

In many people it seems to take about six weeks for a mental image to change to correspond to a new reality. People don't really feel at home in a new house until they have been there about six weeks. By that time their image of "home" has had a chance to change to resemble the reality of the new house. After six months or so, the altered image has become solid enough so that the individual can settle down permanently without further anxiety from that source.

Though the individual himself may change his images gradually as time passes, he does not like to have others try to change them for him before he is ready. That is why people shout and become anxious during an argument. The better the logic of the opponents, the more anxious they make the individual for the safety of his cherished images, and the louder he shouts to defend them; and the more anxious his opponents make him, the more he dislikes them. We have an understandable but unreasonable tendency to dislike people who "beat us" in an argument, who tell us that our loved ones are not all that they are cracked up to be, or who try to make us like people of whom we have a hateful image. In the old days, would-be conquerors often executed messengers who brought them bad news. It was not the messengers' fault that they had to disturb the emperor's image of himself as a world conqueror, but unfortunately they did, and they suffered the consequences of the anxiety they aroused. It is still worth a man's neck to disturb an emperor's image. Nowadays the ax falls more subtly and the execution may be postponed, but sooner or later it comes. It is always wise to be tactful in undertaking the pleasant or unpleasant task of bringing a superior, a friend, a husband, or a wife face to face with the fact that their images and reality do not correspond, or in other words, that they have made a mistake in judgment.

What is called "adjustment" depends on the ability to change one's images to correspond to a new reality. Most people can change some images but not others. A religious person may be willing and able to adjust to any change but a change in religious outlook. A good business executive may be able to change his image of a business situation in a few minutes on the basis of new information brought from the market, but be unable to change his image of how children should be raised on the basis of information brought from the nursery school. A poor businessman may not be able to change his image of a business situation as rapidly

as the market changes, but be able to change his image of his wife from time to time as she changes in reality, so that his marriage is a continued happy success (It may be judged from this that flexibility is often more important than intelligence for success in any field )

Images are made of stuffs of different flexibility Some people have brittle images, which stand up against the assaults of reality with no change up to a certain point, and then suddenly crack wide open, causing great anxiety to the individual These are the rigid personalities Others have waxy images, which melt before the eloquent words of a salesman or critic These are the suggestible personalities

It is most clearly in matters of love that people show the quality of their mental images and how they handle the problem of trying to make reality and images correspond Some men, for example, have such rigid images of the ideal woman that they must marry that they will have no compromise They never meet anyone who fits perfectly into the pattern they have in mind, so either they never marry or else they marry again and again, hoping that eventually they will find a woman of low melting point who will pour herself into the long prepared mould (Incidentally, this is an excellent example of how the same basic psychological characteristic can lead two people by different routes into exactly opposite courses of conduct, which is one claim of psychiatrists that outsiders have difficulty in understanding )

The successful man is one whose images correspond most closely to reality, because then his actions will lead to the results which he imagines A man's failures depend upon the fact that his images do not correspond to reality, whether he is dealing with marriage, politics, business, or the horse races A few lucky ones can make their successes by simply describing their mental images, which may correspond to what a lot of people would like theirs to be These are the poets, artists, and writers, whose images, therefore, need not match reality in order for them to get along A surgeon, on the other hand, must have images in absolute accordance with reality A surgeon whose mental image of the appendix was different from the reality in any respect would not be a good surgeon The whole training of surgeons and engineers is a meticulous attempt to make their images correspond with reality A scientist is a professional image sharpener A man who buys a lottery ticket is an example of how anxious people are to make the world match their images with as little effort as possible

This idea of images is useful in thinking about mental illnesses as well as in studying character A man with the condition known as hysterical paralysis, for example, may be thought of as a man with an altered image of his own body He is paralyzed because he has a highly charged image of himself as paralyzed He is paralyzed "in his mind,"

and because his mind has control of his body, it makes the real body correspond to the mind image as much as possible. In order to cure the hysterical paralysis, the psychiatrist has to offer some other image for the patient to charge with feeling. If the patient removes the charge of feelings from the false body image to a new image formed with the assistance of the psychiatrist, the paralysis will vanish. Since none of this process is under the conscious control of the patient, it cannot be brought about by ordinary methods.

The case of Horace Volk, which we shall hear more about in a later chapter, illustrates this. Fear of his father and other strong emotions altered Horace's image of himself so that in his mind his voice was paralyzed, and hence in reality he could not talk above a whisper. Dr. Treece, the psychiatrist, with careful handling, succeeded in diminishing the intensity of Horace's warping emotional tensions by making the boy weep, and then by suggestion he helped him to form again a normal body image. During this process, Horace formed a strongly charged image of the doctor, which absorbed some of his abnormally strong tensions and helped to relieve the pressure which was distorting his image of himself. When the pressure was thus relieved, Horace's body image returned by "natural elasticity," as it were, to its normal state, and he was then able to talk as usual. None of this could have been done by conscious willing on Horace's part. Even the simpler part of the procedure, the weeping, was beyond his conscious control. It is very difficult for even a talented actress to make herself shed real tears by willing them.

A great man is one who either helps to find out what the world is really like, or else tries to change the world to match his image. In both cases he is trying to bring images and reality closer together by changing one or the other. Einstein's work caused nearly all physicists and mathematicians to change their world images to correspond with the "reality" he had discovered. Shakespeare helps people to have clearer images of what the world is like. The Messiahs of various religions were good men who would have liked the world to correspond to their images of what it should be like.

Some evil men try to change the world by force to match their images of what they want it to be. Hitler had an image of the world as a place where he had supreme power, and used force to try to make the world correspond to his image.

In the mental illness called "schizophrenia," the patient imagines that the world does correspond to his image of it, and does not bother to check. He differs from the aggressive reformer or conqueror in that he is unable or unwilling to do the work of changing "I want" into "is."

Sometimes he starts out as a reformer, and finding that this change is too difficult to bring about in reality, he changes it in his own mind and rests content with that

One of the most important things in life is to understand reality and to keep changing our images to correspond to it, for it is our images which determine our actions and feelings, and the more accurate they are the easier it will be for us to attain happiness and stay happy in an ever-changing world

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What is Berne's explanation of the use of mental energy in *keeping one from doing things*?
- 2 What is meant by the statement that the brain "stores" energy at times?
- 3 What explanation is given for the foolish behavior of some intelligent people, and the good behavior of some far less intelligent people?
- 4 Why is it exhausting to change a strong mental image? How long does it normally take?
- 5 Why is it unwise to try to change another person's mental image while he is in the process of changing it himself?
- 6 State as accurately as possible the *subject* of each of Berne's four sections. Is each section clearly focused on its subject, or are there digressions?
- 7 By looking closely at the last two or three paragraphs of each section determine which sections conclude with summaries and which do not.
- 8 To what extent are the first three sections necessary to the understanding of the fourth section?
- 9 In your opinion, what degree of unity exists in the article as a whole?
- 10 For what purposes does Berne introduce characters like Nana Curt san, "Ann Kayo" and others into his account? Is this device effective?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Approximately what percentage of the population do you think are clear examples of the bodily types called *endomorphs*, *mesomorphs*, and *ectomorphs*? What portion do you think show a slight but noticeable predominance of the characteristics of one or another of these types?
- 2 What are some of the desirable effects of the capacity of the brain to store feelings?
- 3 Do we like people more because of their mental capacity or because of the way they handle their feelings?
- 4 Is it your impression that there are as many very likeable people of high intelligence as there are very unpleasant people of low intelligence? What is your evidence?
- 5 If a successful man is one whose mental images correspond closely to reality, can a man who works all his life at a poorly paid job be called successful?



## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Adjusting to new surroundings
- 2 Literature as a help in achieving a realistic view of life.
- 3 The value of arguments
- 4 Falling in love
- 5 My idea of true success
- 6 Advice for those who want to be tactful.

## DAVID FINK

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## Even Dogs Get Neurotic

### I

The phone waked me, and I picked up the receiver. All that I could hear were explosions, as if blasting were going on. A man was coughing in paroxysmal attacks. Between paroxysms came a gasping, 'Roses, those damn roses. Our maid put roses on the breakfast table. I can't get my breath. I'm choking to death.'

"Take five drops of adrenalin by hypo."

"This asthma is killing me," he went on. "I took your adrenalin. It doesn't help. Something's got to be done. I'm coming to your office at eight thirty this morning."

Then followed another paroxysm of coughing and strangling for air. An asthmatic attack is terrifying to see if you've never seen it before, it's distressing, no matter how many attacks you have witnessed. It's hard to listen to, even over the telephone.

Asthma is another name for spasm of the tubes that lead to the lungs. These tubes, or bronchi, are really hollow muscles. When poisoned by some substance to which the patient is allergic, the hollow muscular tubes clamp down after inhalation, making it impossible for the sufferer to expel the dead air from his chest. He coughs and wheezes until he is red in the face, and the veins on his forehead swell up prominently. He feels that he is suffocating, and he looks it.

I had never seen this particular patient in an actual attack. He had

refused skin tests, said that he had been tested, and that he was sensitive to roses I took for granted that he ought to know Some people are allergic to cats Others are allergic to wheat flour This man was allergic to roses

*I am sensitive to roses myself I love them* Roses are the color of youth and love A rose is the flower of romance Ben Jonson sent his lady fair a rosy wreath, so that she could but breathe upon it, whereupon, according to Ben, it smelled not of itself but her A superlative compliment, indeed, for who else could perfume the most fragrant of flowers? A rose is the symbol of love

Yet, to my patient, roses meant suffocation

He called my office at eight thirty to break his appointment. He was feeling much better and said he would be in to see me at four in the afternoon

At times during the day, I wondered why he had called me early in the morning I felt that he was trying to tell me something, something that he did not understand, something for which he could find no words And in the back of my mind I kept thinking that a rose is a symbol of love

I decided to repeat the famous Korzybski experiment. When the patient came into the office at four that afternoon, the stage was all set I had on my desk a huge bowl, heaped full of roses, white roses, yellow roses, red roses

He gave one look at the roses His jaw dropped, his forehead wrinkled, he gasped, and then went into a paroxysm of coughing While I led him into a treatment room, he coughed and wheezed in a manner almost sickening to behold I gave him a hypodermic injection, and finally his coughing stopped

"How could you be so careless?" he gasped "You know how sensitive I am to roses"

I stepped to my office, picked out a rose, tore it to pieces before his eyes It was made of tissue paper "Dennison's best," I observed casually "And the hypo was sterile distilled water No adrenalin Water"

"You have asthma," I went on But it is not caused by roses, it is caused by neurosis Now that we know the cause we can effect the cure"

## 2

One patient's asthma is the analogue of another person's fear of high places Or fear of closed places. Or palpitation of the heart. Or fear of crowds Or nausea and vomiting Or attacks of faintness and weakness Or pain between the shoulder blades, or in the small of the back There is no limit to the number of physical symptoms that can be called forth by neurosis

Pavlov, the Russian psychologist, wanted to study these things. But he couldn't experiment on human beings very well, because if they have asthma or cramps in the abdomen, they do not like to contribute their persons to the cause of scientific progress. Under those circumstances, they are not in a philanthropic mood. And if they are perfectly well, they don't like to be made sick, even to gratify a doctor's curiosity.

So Pavlov used man's best friend, the dog, to assist him in his discoveries. Dogs have been used to help hunt lions and foxes and wild geese, Pavlov used them to track down the neurosis.

How can the flowers that bloom in the spring produce asthma? How can any harmless and irrelevant stimulus make the body behave as it was never intended to behave? This was Pavlov's problem.

Pavlov might have used roses as his experimental stimulus. He might have, but he didn't. Instead, he used a bell that can still be heard throughout the world of science. His discoveries about the behavior of dogs have helped doctors to understand your problems and your troubles. It is a long way from the psychological laboratories in Russia to the office of your doctor, but that is the distance the sound of Pavlov's bell has traveled.

You know that when meat is put in front of a hungry dog, his mouth waters. He sees and smells the meat, and the sensations of his sight and of his smell are telegraphed by his brain to glands in his cheeks. The brain tells these glands, "Secrete, secrete, food's coming," and the glands get busy. Through little pipes running from the salivary glands to the inside of the dog's mouth, saliva gushes, and the dog is slobbering.

Anyone would expect the dog's glands to salivate at the sight and smell of food. That's nature. But would some stimulus not in any way connected with food produce this automatic salivation? Pavlov asked the question and answered it by devising an ingenious experiment, simple but effective. He would bring meat to his dogs, and just before giving them the meat, he would ring a bell.

In a short time, whenever he rang the bell, the dogs' glands would pour out saliva. Meat or no meat, the bell alone stimulated those glands in the dogs' mouths. The dogs and their glands reacted to a mere bell—a signal not found in nature—exactly as they had reacted to the sight and smell of food.

Pavlov had discovered that glandular responses, an automatic function of the body not under the control of the will, could be trained to respond to an artificial stimulus. He called this response a conditioned reflex.

The hunger and food relationship is a touch of nature that makes clear the kinship of all living things. When you are hungry, and you smell a tender, brown, juicy steak sizzling on the platter, your mouth waters. Tangy smells and promising sights excite your brain and your

imagination Your brain cells telegraph orders to your salivary glands to go to work That's nature, again That's the dog in you

But when you sit in a restaurant and read the menu you do not see or smell the food Your brain is aware only of printed words, and still your mouth waters That's your conditioned reflex That's what reading and writing and civilization do to your salivary glands To you, the traces of printer's ink on the menu card are as the ringing of the bell

A patient salivated excessively whenever business was bad He was constantly spitting The wrong impulses were coming from his brain to his salivary glands This represented the same process that Pavlov developed in his dogs, except that instead of a bell, an accountant's report would set off the conditioned reflex He got that way in childhood, from learning to spit whenever he was angry, or crossed, or worried

An architect whom I treated has occasion to examine structural details of churches from time to time He could not enter a church without excessive salivation Sometimes, when he went into a church, he felt nauseated and had to vomit As a boy in Europe, where religious hatred was in good taste, he was taught to spit every time he passed a certain kind of church.

That's your conditioned reflex, again An automatic glandular function of the body over which we have no voluntary control is stimulated by sounds and sights never found in nature Stimulated by such artificial things as accountants' reports and religious hatreds

A beautiful rose can become the trigger that releases the mechanism of the conditioned reflex This is the story behind the asthmatic patient.

When he was in college, he fell in love with a girl, to whom, on certain mornings, he used to send a bouquet of lovely Cecile Brunner roses 'They were so pink, so small, so dainty,' he told me 'So pure, if you know what I mean I wanted her to know that that was the way I thought of her I went without food to buy them'

He was poor, ambitious He thought that they couldn't marry She thought that he was trying to let her down slowly The clandestine nature of their love made both feel guilty Each projected this guilty feeling into distrust of the other, and this distrust led to jealousy, quarrels, fights He left college and enrolled at another university She became engaged to another man He had a nervous breakdown

Finally, he decided to forget her entirely, and did a pretty good job of it In fact, he had forgotten her completely when he first came to see me But his bronchial tubes had not forgotten For at first, after the two had separated, he would gasp and become rigid whenever he saw a rose Later, this habit became an unconscious reflex, something that he did without being aware of the cause When it became very severe, he had asthma

Suffocation meant many things to him. It was his way of kicking himself. It meant penance for the mistake he had made in yielding to his cowardice. He did not like to admit these things, even to himself. He liked to explain his troubles by saying "allergy." It sounds nicer than hysterical bronchial neurosis. But you don't get well by dodging facts. There is no therapy in running from reality.

The conditioned reflex is at the root of all your habit patterns, good or bad. It is this reflex that makes you go to work, punch the clock, lunch at noon, dine heavily at night, and wish that you hadn't by bedtime.

It is the conditioned reflex that ties up the behavior of your body with situations that are found only in civilization. When man lived in the jungle, his behavior was never conditioned by the need for clothing. Modesty is a conditioned reflex. He was not conditioned by a desire to smoke the brand of cigarettes that are puffed by Mrs. Vanderbilt. Social emulation is a conditioned reflex. He did not eat out his heart because the fellow at the next desk was getting a promotion. He did not get heart burn and indigestion because he was afraid of losing his job. Primitive man was not conditioned to any of these things, and primitive man did not have the jitters.

Early in life we are conditioned in neurotic behavior.

Take the case of a patient who is afraid of high places. When he was five years old, he was seated on the window sill of a second floor, watching a parade. Some overly anxious adult grabbed him by the waistband of his pants, pulled him backward.

"You'll fall," he was told.

When he was still a little fellow, his parents would take him for rides on the ferryboat. He loved to stand at the rail, watch the waves swish by.

Again he was grabbed. "Don't go near the edge," he was told. Then followed arguments, tears, scoldings.

This was the beginning of the conditioning of his reflexes—involving the glands, heart, lungs—in situations where there was danger of falling. Then, when he was about fourteen years old, came the severe blow that he has never forgotten. With a friend, he was climbing on a scaffolding of a building under construction. His little friend fell and suffered a broken back and paralysis of both legs.

Immediately, all of the old warnings came back to him. There resulted such a fear of high places that today he cannot go into a tall office building without his knees turning to jelly and his innards doing a flip-flap.

He knows that it is silly to feel as he does, but he cannot help it. His intestines, his glands, his heart—those parts of the body that are under automatic control—respond to the situation in this unpleasant manner, and he is unable to control them. His whole body has been conditioned,

just as the salivary glands of Pavlov's dogs were conditioned, and his body responds just as automatically

It is natural for all of the functions of the body to adjust to critical situations. You could see this for yourself if you had an X ray machine. You would feed a dog a meal containing bismuth, a substance that looks white under the X-ray. Watching a dog under the X ray, you could see him swallow the bismuth meal, see his stomach and his intestines fill up. You could see the normal, slow, wormlike movements of his intestines as he digests the food.

Now bring a cat into the scene. The dog becomes tense, the hair of his neck bristles up, and all movement of his stomach and intestines comes to a stop. In anger or in any other emotion, such as fear or jealousy, the dog reacts with his entire body.

Just as the dog's salivary glands can be conditioned to respond to any stimulus, so can his stomach and intestines be conditioned. This goes for you, too.

A patient has a gastric ulcer. When he was a boy, the dinner bell was the gong that began the next round of a never-ending family fight. His stomach would go into spasms, his intestines into knots, just at meal-times. His abdominal organs, not under control of the will, became conditioned to respond to fear at the very sight of food. At the time when his stomach and intestines should be gently relaxed, they now clamp down on whatever food he has swallowed, scraping and tearing at the soft lining of his stomach. A conditioned reflex of his stomach produced an ulcer that will not heal. Now an operation is necessary. This is what bad training or conditioning can do for a person.

### 3

Beneath every neurosis lies the conditioning of some automatic function of the body to behave in a manner never intended for it by nature. The salivary responses of a dog can be so conditioned as to respond at the sound of a bell. The fear responses, including spasm of the stomach, cowering tension of muscles, can also be conditioned to respond at the sound of a bell.

What would happen if both reflexes, so opposite in their nature, were evoked at the same time? This experiment was made.

A dog was conditioned to react to a bell, a bell with a low musical note, just as he would react to food. Every time he heard the low musical note, food was brought and his tail would wag, he would jump about in happy anticipation, and his mouth would water. Soon he was conditioned to act this way whenever he heard the bell with the low musical note.

Next, his fear reflexes were conditioned to respond to a bell with a high musical note. An electric wire was attached to a storage battery, and

every time the high note was sounded the dog received a slight shock. The dog, of course, was frightened. In a short time, he showed the same fear whenever the high note was sounded, even when no shock occurred. And when I say he showed fear, remember that I am talking about his muscle tensions, his cowering in a corner with his tail between his legs. Fear means the cramping of his intestines and the dryness of his mouth. His whole body, from the tip of his nose to the ultimate hairs on his tail, was conditioned to react to the high pitched bell.

Then the bells were changed gradually. Every day, for the high pitched bell, one a little lower in tone was substituted. Still the dog's behavior remained the same. He was no longer receiving electric shocks, of course, but he was fearing the bell with the high pitched tone.

Now, while the tone of high pitch that set off the fear reaction was being changed daily for a tone of slightly lower pitch, the low pitched bell that set off the salivation reaction was also being changed. Daily, for the low bell that promised good things to eat were substituted other bells, each one of slightly higher pitch. Still, for a long time, the dog did not notice the difference. When the lower note was sounded, the dog's automatic bodily functions, such as salivation, relaxation of the intestines, secretion of gastric juices, and so forth, reacted exactly as they would to food itself.

The bell of lower pitch said, 'Come and get it,' and the dog would wag his tail, act happy. The bell of the higher pitch said, 'The goblins'll git you ef you don't watch out,' and the dog would cower in a corner with his mouth dry, his tail between his legs.

Finally the day came when the sounds of the low- and high pitched bells were so much alike that the dog could not distinguish between them. Two antagonistic conditioned reflexes were set off by an intermediate bell.

What did the dog do? Just what a human being would do under like circumstances. He developed a neurosis. He crept into a corner, trembled all over. He refused all food. He could not sleep. He was highly irritable, snapped at everyone. At times his heart would beat wildly. At other times he would slobber copiously. Sometimes his mouth would be cotton dry, but he refused all water. Conflicting conditioned reflexes had made the poor animal neurotic. It shouldn't happen to a dog, but it did.

It took six months of careful re-education to cure the dog of his neurosis. And, by the way, the next time that you are told that mental disorders are 'imaginary,' you can describe this experimental neurosis in dogs. Ask the 'snap-out-of-it' adviser and the 'just go-home and forget it' consultant whether he would know how to cure a dog's neurosis. If he can't cure a dog, why let him experiment on you? It shouldn't happen—not even to a man.

Experimental neuroses have been produced in dogs, sheep, and even pigs. The suffering of these animals has taught us much about the unhappy behavior of human beings, has taught us methods of relieving and preventing human suffering. Pavlov's bell can be heard in the practice of medicine in every country in the world. For sufferers from mental disease, Pavlov has sounded a veritable liberty bell.

The experimental neurosis produced in dogs by conditioning in conflicting responses is just what happens by accident to us humans. Our bodies are conditioned to react in a fear response to a certain stimulus, and then our bodies are conditioned to react in a love response to the very same stimulus. A father will slap his son for no good reason, and the next day will give him candy for the same reason. The child never knows where he stands. Father has become the stimulus that stands for a piece of candy and a sock on the jaw.

When we cannot distinguish between stimuli, we become confused. Conflict occurs within ourselves. There develops a tug of war between nerve cells in the brain. We feel that we must do two contradictory things at the same time. This conflict does not occur at a level of brain activity that is under our conscious control. The conflict involves our glands, our stomachs, intestines, blood vessels. All we know is that we feel nervous, that we have abdominal cramps, or that our feet are cold and clammy. If our digestion is affected, we take bicarbonate of soda and find fault with the cook.

Our bodies and our minds are taught thousands of behavior patterns, many of which are in complete conflict with each other. In almost every family, situations arise that produce friction, jealousy, and strain. Situations also arise which produce loyalty, security, affection, and love. The result is that children love, fear, and hate their parents at one and the same time, and are only vaguely aware of their conflicting emotions.

Freud stressed the element of jealousy, calling the resulting habit pattern the Oedipus complex. Because the family is an almost universal social unit, and because this habit pattern of jealousy is very common, psychiatrists all over the world have been able to verify Freud's shrewd observation. In all times, boys have craved fatherly love, and boys have wanted to lick the old man at his own game. This eternal conflict between love and hate has made literature, history, progress, and neuroses.

A doctor's son (ten years old) expressed the ancient conflict when he observed naively, 'I'm going to be a better doctor than you because I'll know everything you can teach me and a lot more, besides.' He's probably right, but if anyone doesn't realize that these conflicting habit patterns or complexes underlie much of the antagonism and conflict between generations, he hasn't looked far beneath the surface of things.

The mind of man is many faceted, like a diamond, reflecting various



colors, each determined by the angle of approach. All of us belong to many groups or classes, each one of which has developed its own fair trade practices and standards, its own ideas of what is fair and what is foul. So we have many behavior patterns, each of which is appropriate for the specific group of situations in which we find ourselves.

Unfortunately, these standards differ so from each other that it is often difficult to reconcile one with another. It is all right for Babe Ruth on the coaching line to yell at a pitcher to rattle him or distract his attention. He would never do this to an opponent putting on the eighteenth green. This consideration probably does not prevent his sleeping nights. After all, baseball and golf are only games. But there are situations, many of them, in the experience of all of us, where conflict between our standards or ideals threatens the integrity of our very lives. These are the situations which produce the neurotic behavior of our times.

For example, the conflict between the ideals of patriotism and ideals of personal economic and social advancement explains some of the neuroses of our draft army. Here is Johnny Jones, twenty-five years old, brought up to believe in rugged individualism. He wants intensely to make something of himself, get ahead in the world, buy his own home, get married, and be well thought of in his own little world of relatives and friends. He's drafted and in the army for the duration. Perhaps he was getting somewhere in his trade or profession. Now what? If he could feel like a martyr in a concentration camp, there would not be the same mental conflict. But he knows that he isn't a martyr. He wants to do his duty to his country. Two conflicting emotional habit patterns are tearing many a Johnny Jones apart, producing war neuroses.

Our civilization is at once so complex, so diverse, and so closely knitted together that all of us suffer from conflict of habit patterns that cannot be reconciled. The gracious hostess in the living room may be somewhat less than gracious and considerate in the kitchen when the dining-room door is closed. A bullying, domineering husband may be a good fellow on the golf course or in the cocktail bar. The strait-laced moralist has been known to let down a bit when far from home at a convention. So he attends stag parties with the rest of the boys. All of us are quick-change artists with many uniforms and many flags, which we are able to doff and don, furl and unfurl, in a twinkling as we move from scene to scene. All of this, however, hardly makes for integrity and inner peace.

We have habit patterns for our life in the factory or store or office that are in conflict with the habit patterns for our life at home. At the store, Mother engages in her daily battle with the butcher, determined to get as little bone and gristle as possible, the best and the most for her money. At home, she takes the worst cut for herself, and the skimpiest helping,

so that there will be enough for the children. But sometimes the habit pattern of greed that may be appropriate in her marketing is evoked in the home. Then there is family trouble. Or her husband may get big hearted and treat the customers the way he treats members of the family, until the sheriff puts a padlock on the door to end such nonsense. In such cases, habit patterns or standards of behavior are inconsistent and conflicting. People try to reconcile antagonistic habit patterns and get confused. Then come the long hours of the night, when they toss about in bed, coaxing the sleep that does not come. Conflict between habit patterns makes jitters.

#### 4

It's hard to be aware of these, your own habit patterns, because they are tied up not so much with your mind as with the behavior of your heart and intestines and glands. You become aware simply of nervousness when such habit patterns are frustrated or when the behavior that they commanded can no longer be continued. Then there arises a sense of strain, of lack of fulfillment. Perhaps it is a job that is lost, or a farm that has gone with the wind. Perhaps you have been graduated from school and come September, you miss the old school habits and associations. Perhaps you had a trade skill that has been replaced by an automatic machine.

There you stand, the gun loaded, sighted, ready to shoot but the order to fire is never given.

This lopping off of an activity is a common thing in life. It occurs constantly in childhood. It occurs when people move from city to city and give up their old friends and associations. It occurs when they move from one job to another. It happens with divorce. It occurs when a girl marries.

Before marriage, one typical case had been an active, well trained, happy private secretary. She read all of the ads, brushed her teeth for the smile of beauty, took cathartics for the smile of health, mouthwash for the smell of health, ate the vitamins that gave her pep and vivacity, recommended the right kind of decaffeinated coffee, and so she married the boss.

Then her troubles began. She hated housework. The boss, now her husband, said, Hire a maid, a cook, a butler. For God's sake, quit whining. Enjoy the sunshine and fresh air. You haven't anything else to do. Nothing to do, and filled with habit patterns of action. Nothing to do, and burning up to do something anything except to plan another futile, empty day.

'Thinking up things to do is the hardest job I ever had,' she told me.  
'Not knowing what to do next gives me the jitters.'

A man of sixty five was retired from his job on a nice pension He had worked in one place for forty years They gave him a farewell dinner and a gold watch They told him how lucky he was to be able to take things easy For the next six months he watched the seconds crawl by on his gold watch Then he died, of nothing to do

This tragedy of the elderly is familiar to everyone Yet how little is done to help its countless victims! How to make old age dignified, creative, and comfortable constitutes a large social problem Social security for the emeritus requires more than a pension check Deprived, perhaps of those dear to them and of familiar haunts and accustomed ways, they are strangers in a brisk new world They need rescue from futility and boredom We must establish a fifth freedom—freedom to serve in old age

We are indebted to Pavlov for our knowledge that the supposedly automatic workings of our organs, our hearts, lungs, stomach, intestines, glands, are set in motion or restrained by artificial stimulation

He showed that our bodies get all worked up over excitements as low as his bell He showed that these physical responses are not under the control of the will When you have been conditioned to blush at the drop of a garter, you can instruct the blood vessels of your face not to dilate, but they won't listen They have been conditioned to respond, so when there's garter dropping going on, your facial blood vessels will dilate, and you are going to feel embarrassed

The experimental neurosis in dogs shows that conflicting conditioned reflexes produce severe neurotic behavior Dogs, sheep, pigs, mice, or men, it makes no difference Furnish the conflicting habit patterns, and up pop the jitters

From these magnificent beginnings, we have made further progress We are on our way to discovering how the conditioned reflex works We have tracked down the reflex to its lair, have discovered that special part of the brain where nervousness lurks The next step is to demonstrate the anatomy of nervousness, to help you win your war on nerves

## 5

The conditioned reflex is just another name for emotional habits I mention this because people in trouble do have emotions of which they are most unpleasantly aware, while conditioned reflexes, they think, are for dogs and psychological laboratories Of course, you may continue to talk about conditioned reflexes, and I'll probably slip into professional jargon, too, when I forget But I am interested in explaining the nervous ills of troubled people, in order to teach them how to take care of themselves, so I shall be content to use in the place of "conditioned reflexes" the homely expression "emotional habits"

When dogs slobber at the sight of food and go through all of the other motions that mean ecstatic expectancy, they are behaving emotionally. Pavlov proved that this emotional experience can be aroused not only by food but by some stimulus in no way connected with eating. His experiments have led the way to the proof that conflict between emotional habits gives us our nervous breakdowns. We have seen how this works out in the case of dogs. This is how emotional conflict worked out in the case of a certain woman, whom we will call Mrs. Jack Aranda.

Her strongest emotional habits were tied up in two great loves, the first for herself and the second for her daughter. Since childhood, the enjoyment of social esteem had been her greatest satisfaction in life. When her wealthy husband died, her claim to social distinction as the wife of a prominent man died with him. She was a has been. She was just another rich widow with a little girl to bring up. She felt, rightly or wrongly, that her only chance to regain importance was through her daughter. So she gave the little girl every opportunity—dancing lessons, parties, the right neighborhood and the right friends, the right private school, riding lessons, tennis, golf, to fit her to marry the son-in-law who was to re-establish Mother's self-esteem. Of course, Mother didn't reason it out quite so cold-bloodedly. She simply hoped that her daughter would make a suitable marriage, "for the girl's own sake, you know." But subconsciously she was guided by her well established behavior patterns of seeking social esteem through the achievement of some member of her family.

Well, in spite of all her advantages, the girl turned out to be a pretty decent sort. She went to college, learned to think for herself, and married—no, not a Filipino houseboy, but a petty officer in Uncle Sam's Navy.

Mrs. Aranda knew in her heart that the girl had made a wise choice. She also knew that her lifetime's effort, her cherished schemes and strata-gems 'for the girl,' had been wasted.

"A petty officer," she wailed. "A petty officer!"

The conflict between the two emotional habits, her love for her daughter and her love for social position, was not petty. She suffered a complete nervous breakdown. For more than a year she had no emotional control, and she went through hells of suffering.

'I want my daughter to be happy,' one part of her mind was saying. The other part of her mind was crying, 'I want a son-in-law about whom I can brag.'

"I love my daughter, she's all I have in the world," and 'I hate my daughter, why did she let me down?'

These conflicts were not on a conscious level, of course. Mrs. Aranda knew only that she was distracted, could not sleep, and was losing weight. Actually, she did not connect her emotional conflicts with her physical symptoms. She consulted a doctor because she thought she might have a

cancer People often think up such diagnoses for themselves under such circumstances

Collision between opposing emotions is at the bottom of every neurosis What is more, a great many people suffer to some extent from emotional conflicts over which they have no control To that extent, they are that much more unhappy and ineffective than need be Countless numbers of men and women, rich or poor, are living lives of unnecessary frustration and despair Countless numbers have great possibilities of thinking and feeling and doing that they never express in thought or in action Dissatisfied because of their unrealized capacities, they are living miserably on a level of thought and action that is far beneath their capacities

The first step in acquiring emotional control depends upon understanding the nature of emotional habits A lot of people talk as glibly about emotions as they do about television—understanding neither This is satisfactory, as far as television goes, because most people will never be called upon to repair a television set Emotional habit patterns, however, cannot be turned over to a specialist The expert can advise, can tell you what to do about your emotional conflicts To resolve them, each patient must minister to himself It is essential, then, for you to understand just how your emotions work, if you want to know how to live and like it.

## 6

Fear is a typical emotion, easy to understand When you are afraid, you think that you see some menace You think that something is going to hurt you It may be only paper roses Pavlov's dogs were taught to fear a harmless sound as they would fear an electric shock War refugees safe in a far country, continue to duck while their blood curdles and their flesh crawls whenever they hear an airplane overhead The cause of your fear may seem silly to your sister in law But emotion is unreasonable and if you have learned to see danger in any particular situation, you may be afraid every time you become aware of that situation

Awareness of danger is not necessarily fear Fear is unpleasant, but for many people the awareness of danger is exciting and exhilarating For this reason Park Avenue people climb mountains and Coney Islanders ride roller-coasters They like to feel that they are part of a dangerous situation More imaginative minds get their kick out of their perceptions of ticklish situations in their daily routine of living Always to feel safe is dull The feeling of danger, whether evoked synthetically on a roller coaster or excited by a flirtation with an attractive person or an unattractive grizzly bear, gives a flesh tingling thrill

Fear is a compound of physical and mental processes To an awareness of danger, something more must be added That something more is contributed by your physical reactions in preparation for running away

Danger, plus the muscle tensions that make the knees quake and the back shiver, is fear. Danger, plus the hotness of the eyeballs and the dryness of the mouth, is fear. Danger, plus a spasm of the bowels and of the bladder, is fear. These physical reactions of fear are under the direction of the nervous system, which also participates in the complex of fright behavior. Fear is activity, physical and mental, with rapid strategic retreat as its motive.

It is easy to think that fear is what you feel. But fear is more than that. Of course, when your knees knock and your hands shake and your forehead perspires, you feel these disagreeable sensations. You know only too well that sinking feeling in the pit of the stomach. All of your tense muscles and your churned up insides are sending their messages to the brain, giving you the unpleasant emotional feeling that you associate with fear. But while these sensations are a part of the emotion of fear, they are not all of it or even most of it. Fear is what you do with your entire body and mind. You feel only a part of what your body and mind have done by way of preparing you for flight, and what you feel is one more ingredient in the total emotion.

Let's get back to Mrs. Jack Aranda and her fear. Mrs. Aranda was afraid of what friends would say about her daughter's marriage. So every time that she met one of her friends, what happened? She wanted to run away. Her mouth became dry. Her eyeballs felt hot. Her knees trembled. The muscles of her legs felt weak, as if they had turned to jelly. Her heart raced, pounded. She could feel it palpitate beneath her Bergdorf Goodman gown. She would perspire, and her hands and feet felt cold as she ducked around corners to avoid people. Her breath would become short, and she would find herself panting. Her stomach, intestines, even her bladder would go into spasms. And although she could not be aware of it, her glands of internal secretion were doing their share to keep up with the rest of her body. The adrenals were pouring their secretion into the blood stream, and the adrenalin was having its effect in driving her liver to supply unneeded nourishment to her wearied muscles.

Fifty years ago, William James said that you do not run because you fear, you fear because you run. He was on the right track, for sensation follows organic reactions. To Mrs. Jack Aranda, friends had come to mean fear, and fear is a thing that you do with your entire body. Mrs. Aranda ran.

Unreflecting persons would say that they do things because they experience fear, as if fear were a physical thing like a policeman's club or an automobile horn. They confuse the emotional process with the stimulus or with their own feelings. They do not realize that fear is the way the entire organism, body and mind, reacts to some frightening situations.

They wouldn't say that they walk because of sidewalks, nor do they identify the way they feel when they walk with the process of walking. Walking is just one of the things that they do. Well, fear is just another thing that they do and that they experience after the fact.

So what is this emotion that we call fear? It is not a thing but a process, something that we do in five stages. *First* we perceive danger. *Second* we desire to escape. (One man's danger, of course, is another man's workaday life. The structural steel worker who leans against the wind while riveting on high scaffoldings might turn green with fear in a small boat on a choppy sea. The sailor who scampers up the ropes on a mast like a monkey might tremble at the thought of catching red hot rivets on a steel beam.) *Third* bodily responses follow the first two intellectual factors. *Fourth* some of the bodily responses stir up disagreeable sensations and feelings which we would be rid of and which create, *Fifth* a secondary motive to find relief in safety. If safety is impossible, these secondary feelings may become so intense as to produce paralyzing terror.

You end your fear when you stop the process in any one of these five activities. You were afraid of burglars when you heard unusual noises in the living room. Shaking from head to foot, you peeked in. Only a window shade blowing in the wind. What a relief—an end to an awareness of danger—and of fear. You killed fear in its first stage.

You are afraid of climbing a mountain. The very thought of the narrow footpath on the edge of the canyon makes you shiver. After you do it a few times, you may no longer desire to escape from the situation. You learn to enjoy the danger. You take pleasure in your unsuspected gift for mountain climbing, and fear vanishes.

You are afraid of the future. You learn how to relax, and indirectly you relax the organs that had been giving you cramps. With no organic response, there can be no fear.

And with no organic response to danger, no disagreeable sensations can arise to create the feeling that people call fear. Brain surgeons can end habitual fear by cutting the connections between the nerve centers of organic reactions and the centers of awareness. This is drastic and impracticable, but it shows clearly that fear is eliminated by stopping the fear process in any one of its stages. When you stop doing any single thing that makes up the fear process, you do not have the secondary motive of seeking relief, which has served to increase the desire for escape.

This is the pattern of all emotions. The organic nature of our so-called mental processes is usually neglected in seeking the causes of unhappiness. But I have deliberately emphasized it, for its importance in treatment is fundamental.

## FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Explain how a *conditioned reflex* may be the cause of a physical ailment when there is no physical evidence of anything to cause the ailment
- 2 What are the usual physical effects of a critical situation on *automatic bodily functions*?
- 3 What is the effect of stimulating opposing bodily habits (conditioned reflexes) at the same time?
- 4 How does neurotic behavior arise from the conflict of different standards or ideals?
- 5 In what way can a psychiatrist help you to cure disturbances which you can't control yourself?
- 6 How can fear be stopped by attention to its physical manifestations in the automatic bodily functions?
- 7 In what ways does the dramatic incident told in Section I fit into the structure of the article as a whole?
- 8 Note the various incidents involving specific people which Fink describes in the course of the article. What are their probable sources, and for what reasons does he introduce them into the article?
- 9 What do you consider Fink's concluding major point to be? Is it more or less, important than any of the other major points he makes? To what degree are the preceding points essential steps in reaching the concluding point?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 If fear and anxiety, with all their bad physical and mental effects are bound to arise from the conflict of opposing ideals in our society what courses can we take to improve the situation?
- 2 Give some examples of troublesome conflicts that arise within individuals because of their family relationships
- 3 What reasons exist in man's earlier history for the automatic bodily responses to critical situations? Why are these responses usually not appropriate in civilized society?
- 4 What are some of the most frequent causes, in our society, of fear and anxiety?
- 5 Give some prominent examples of political behavior in which anxiety, and attempts to stimulate anxiety, play an important part

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 The difference between fear and perception of danger
- 2 A case of fear in a child and how it could have been avoided
- 3 Retraining a horse (dog, or other animal) that has become neurotic.
- 4 How to approach an important interview
- 5 Military service is good (or bad) for young men's emotional health.

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*Fink Even Dogs Get Neurotic*



## CARL R ROGERS

born 1902 a specialist in psychotherapy in counseling is Executive Secretary of the Counseling Center of the University of Chicago He is the author of *Counseling and Psychotherapy* and *Client Centered Therapy* [Reprinted from the Harvard Business Review, July August 1952 by permission]

### *Barriers and Gateways to Communication*

It may seem curious that a person like myself, whose whole professional effort is devoted to psychotherapy, should be interested in problems of communication. What relationship is there between obstacles to communication and providing therapeutic help to individuals with emotional maladjustments?

Actually the relationship is very close indeed. The whole task of psychotherapy is the task of dealing with a failure in communication. The emotionally maladjusted person, the 'neurotic,' is in difficulty, first, because communication within himself has broken down and, secondly, because as a result of this his communication with others has been damaged. To put it another way, in the 'neurotic' individual parts of himself which have been termed unconscious, or repressed, or denied to awareness, become blocked off so that they no longer communicate themselves to the conscious or managing part of himself, as long as this is true, there are distortions in the way he communicates himself to others, and so he suffers both within himself and in his interpersonal relations.

The task of psychotherapy is to help the person achieve, through a special relationship with a therapist, good communication within himself. Once this is achieved, he can communicate more freely and more effectively with others. We may say then that psychotherapy is good communication, within and between men. We may also turn that statement around and it will still be true. Good communication, free communication within or between men is always therapeutic.

It is then, from a background of experience with communication in counseling and psychotherapy that I want to present two ideas. (1) I wish to state what I believe is one of the major factors in blocking or impeding communication, and then (2) I wish to present what in our experience has proved to be a very important way of improving or facilitating communication.

#### **BARRIER THE TENDENCY TO EVALUATE**

I should like to propose, as a hypothesis for consideration, that the major barrier to mutual interpersonal communication is our very

natural tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve (or disapprove) the statement of the other person or the other group. Let me illustrate my meaning with some very simple examples. Suppose someone, commenting on this discussion, makes the statement, "I didn't like what that man said." What will you respond? Almost invariably your reply will be either approval or disapproval of the attitude expressed. Either you respond, "I didn't either, I thought it was terrible," or else you tend to reply, "Oh, I thought it was really good." In other words, your primary reaction is to evaluate it from *your* point of view, your own frame of reference.

Or take another example. Suppose I say with some feeling, "I think the Republicans are behaving in ways that show a lot of good sense these days." What is the response that arises in your mind? The overwhelming likelihood is that it will be evaluative. In other words, you will find yourself agreeing or disagreeing, or making some judgment about me such as "He must be a conservative," or "He seems solid in his thinking." Or let us take an illustration from the international scene. Russia says vehemently, "The treaty with Japan is a war plot on the part of the United States." We rise as one person to say, "That's a lie!"

This last illustration brings in another element connected with my hypothesis. Although the tendency to make evaluations is common in almost all interchange of language, it is very much heightened in those situations where feelings and emotions are deeply involved. So the stronger our feelings, the more likely it is that there will be no mutual element in the communication. There will be just two ideas, two feelings, two judgments, missing each other in psychological space.

I am sure you recognize this from your own experience. When you have not been emotionally involved yourself and have listened to a heated discussion, you often go away thinking, "Well, they actually weren't talking about the same thing." And they were not. Each was making a judgment, an evaluation, from his own frame of reference. There was really nothing which could be called communication in any genuine sense. This tendency to react to any emotionally meaningful statement by forming an evaluation of it from our own point of view is, I repeat, the major barrier to interpersonal communication.

### GATEWAY LISTENING WITH UNDERSTANDING

Is there any way of solving this problem, of avoiding this barrier? I feel that we are making exciting progress toward this goal, and I should like to present it as simply as I can. Real communication occurs, and this evaluative tendency is avoided, when we listen with understanding. What does that mean? It means to see the expressed idea and attitude from the other person's point of view, to sense how it feels to

him, to achieve his frame of reference in regard to the thing he is talking about.

Stated so briefly, this may sound absurdly simple, but it is not. It is an approach which we have found extremely potent in the field of psychotherapy. It is the most effective agent we know for altering the basic personality structure of an individual and for improving his relationships and his communications with others. If I can listen to what he can tell me, if I can understand how it seems to him, if I can see its personal meaning for him, if I can sense the emotional flavor which it has for him, then I will be releasing potent forces of change in him.

Again, if I can really understand how he hates his father, or hates the company, or hates Communists—if I can catch the flavor of his fear of insanity, or his fear of atom bombs, or of Russia—it will be of the greatest help to him in altering those hatreds and fears and in establishing realistic and harmonious relationships with the very people and situations toward which he has felt hatred and fear. We know from our research that such empathic understanding—understanding *with* a person, not *about* him—is such an effective approach that it can bring about major changes in personality.

Some of you may be feeling that you listen well to people and yet you have never seen such results. The chances are great indeed that your listening has not been of the type I have described. Fortunately, I can suggest a little laboratory experiment which you can try to test the quality of your understanding. The next time you get into an argument with your wife, or your friend, or with a small group of friends, just stop the discussion for a moment and, for an experiment, institute this rule: "Each person can speak up for himself only *after* he has first restated the ideas and feelings of the previous speaker accurately and to that speaker's satisfaction."

You see what this would mean. It would simply mean that before presenting your own point of view, it would be necessary for you to achieve the other speaker's frame of reference—to understand his thoughts and feelings so well that you could summarize them for him. Sounds simple, doesn't it? But if you try it, you will discover that it is one of the most difficult things you have ever tried to do. However, once you have been able to see the other's point of view, your own comments will have to be drastically revised. You will also find the emotion going out of the discussion, the differences being reduced, and those differences which remain being of a rational and understandable sort.

Can you imagine what this kind of an approach would mean if it were projected into larger areas? What would happen to a labor management dispute if it were conducted in such a way that labor, without necessarily agreeing, could accurately state management's point of view in a way

that management could accept, and management, without approving labor's stand, could state labor's case in a way that labor agreed was accurate? It would mean that real communication was established, and one could practically guarantee that some reasonable solution would be reached

If, then, this way of approach is an effective avenue to good communication and good relationships, as I am quite sure you will agree if you try the experiment I have mentioned, why is it not more widely tried and used? I will try to list the difficulties which keep it from being utilized

*Need for Courage* In the first place it takes courage, a quality which is not too widespread I am indebted to Dr S I Hayakawa the semantacist, for pointing out that to carry on psychotherapy in this fashion is to take a very real risk, and that courage is required If you really understand another person in this way, if you are willing to enter his private world and see the way life appears to him, without any attempt to make evaluative judgments, you run the risk of being changed yourself You might see it his way, you might find yourself influenced in your attitudes or your personality

This risk of being changed is one of the most frightening prospects many of us can face If I enter, as fully as I am able, into the private world of a neurotic or psychotic individual isn't there a risk that I might become lost in that world? Most of us are afraid to take that risk Or if we were listening to a Russian Communist, or Senator Joe McCarthy, how many of us would dare to try to see the world from each of their points of view? The great majority of us could not *listen* we would find ourselves compelled to *evaluate* because listening would seem too dangerous So the first requirement is courage, and we do not always have it

*Heightened Emotions* But there is a second obstacle It is just when emotions are strongest that it is most difficult to achieve the frame of reference of the other person or group Yet it is then that the attitude is most needed if communication is to be established We have not found this to be an insuperable obstacle in our experience in psychotherapy A third party, who is able to lay aside his own feelings and evaluations, can assist greatly by listening with understanding to each person or group and clarifying the views and attitudes each holds

We have found this effective in small groups in which contradictory or antagonistic attitudes exist When the parties to a dispute realize that they are being understood that someone sees how the situation seems to them, the statements grow less exaggerated and less defensive, and it is no longer necessary to maintain the attitude, I am 100% right and you are 100% wrong The influence of such an understanding catalyst in

the group permits the members to come closer and closer to the objective truth involved in the relationship. In this way mutual communication is established, and some type of agreement becomes much more possible.

So we may say that though heightened emotions make it much more difficult to understand *with* an opponent, our experience makes it clear that a neutral, understanding catalyst type of leader or therapist can overcome this obstacle in a small group.

*Size of Group* That last phrase, however, suggests another obstacle to utilizing the approach I have described. Thus far all our experience has been with small face-to-face groups—groups exhibiting industrial tensions, religious tensions, racial tensions, and therapy groups in which many personal tensions are present. In these small groups our experience, confirmed by a limited amount of research, shows that this basic approach leads to improved communication, to greater acceptance of others and by others, and to attitudes which are more positive and more problem solving in nature. There is a decrease in defensiveness, in exaggerated statements, in evaluative and critical behavior.

But these findings are from small groups. What about trying to achieve understanding between larger groups that are geographically remote, or between face-to-face groups that are not speaking for themselves but simply as representatives of others? Frankly, we do not know the answers to these questions. I believe the situation might be put this way. As social scientists we have a tentative test tube solution of the problem of breakdown in communication. But to confirm the validity of this test tube solution and to adapt it to the enormous problems of communication breakdown between classes, groups, and nations would involve additional funds, much more research, and creative thinking of a high order.

Yet with our present limited knowledge we can see some steps which might be taken even in large groups to increase the amount of listening *with* and decrease the amount of evaluation *about*. To be imaginative for a moment, let us suppose that a therapeutically oriented international group went to the Russian leaders and said, "We want to achieve a genuine understanding of your views and, even more important, of your attitudes and feelings toward the United States. We will summarize and resummarize these views and feelings if necessary, until you agree that our description represents the situation as it seems to you."

Then suppose they did the same thing with the leaders in our own country. If they then gave the widest possible distribution to these two views, with the feelings clearly described but not expressed in name-calling, might not the effect be very great? It would not guarantee the type of understanding I have been describing, but it would make it much more possible. We can understand the feelings of a person who hates us

much more readily when his attitudes are accurately described to us by a neutral third party than we can when he is shaking his fist at us

*Faith in Social Sciences* But even to describe such a first step is to suggest another obstacle to this approach of understanding Our civilization does not yet have enough faith in the social sciences to utilize their findings The opposite is true of the physical sciences During the war when a test tube solution was found to the problem of synthetic rubber, millions of dollars and an army of talent were turned loose on the problem of using that finding If synthetic rubber could be made in milligrams, it could and would be made in the thousands of tons And it was But in the social science realm, if a way is found of facilitating communication and mutual understanding in small groups, there is no guarantee that the finding will be utilized It may be a generation or more before the money and the brains will be turned loose to exploit that finding

### SUMMARY

In closing, I should like to summarize this small scale solution to the problem of barriers in communication, and to point out certain of its characteristics

I have said that our research and experience to date would make it appear that breakdowns in communication, and the evaluative tendency which is the major barrier to communication, can be avoided The solution is provided by creating a situation in which each of the different parties comes to understand the other from the *other's* point of view This has been achieved, in practice, even when feelings run high, by the influence of a person who is willing to understand each point of view empathically, and who thus acts as a catalyst to precipitate further understanding

This procedure has important characteristics It can be initiated by one party, without waiting for the other to be ready It can even be initiated by a neutral third person, provided he can gain a minimum of cooperation from one of the parties

This procedure can deal with the insincerities, the defensive exaggerations, the lies, the "false fronts" which characterize almost every failure in communication These defensive distortions drop away with astonishing speed as people find that the only intent is to understand, not to judge

This approach leads steadily and rapidly toward the discovery of the truth, toward a realistic appraisal of the objective barriers to communication The dropping of some defensiveness by one party leads to further dropping of defensiveness by the other party, and truth is thus approached

This procedure gradually achieves mutual communication. Mutual communication tends to be pointed toward solving a problem rather than toward attacking a person or group. It leads to a situation in which I see how the problem appears to you as well as to me, and you see how it appears to me as well as to you. Thus accurately and realistically defined, the problem is almost certain to yield to intelligent attack, or if it is in part insoluble, it will be comfortably accepted as such.

This then appears to be a test-tube solution to the breakdown of communication as it occurs in small groups. Can we take this small-scale answer, investigate it further, refine it, develop it, and apply it to the tragic and well-nigh fatal failures of communication which threaten the very existence of our modern world? It seems to me that this is a possibility and a challenge which we should explore.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Explain what Rogers means by "communication *within* men."
- 2 On what grounds does he base his hypothesis that the tendency to approve or disapprove is a barrier to mutual communication?
- 3 What means does he suggest as gateways to understanding? What are the purposes of such gateways?
- 4 Why, in Rogers' opinion, is there a need for courage in attempting to find gateways to understanding?
- 5 What reasons does Rogers give for and against the use in international affairs of the method he suggests? In what ways does he imply that the problem might be approached?
- 6 What evidence can you find in the article itself that it was composed to be read aloud to an audience?
- 7 Under the heading *Summary*, is Rogers trying simply to recapitulate his main points, or does he have some other purpose? What are some of the values of his summary in its effects on an audience? Are these values also present for the individual silent reader?
- 8 Explain how Rogers uses the metaphor of "gateways" and "barriers" as a basis for the plan of organization of his essay.
- 9 Of what importance to the structure of the essay is Rogers' idea of a "test tube solution" to the problem of communication?
- 10 How would you rate the essay on its power to stimulate constructive thought and discussion?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Do you think Rogers offers a realistic solution to the problem of mutual understanding?
- 2 Is he justified in reversing the statement "Psychotherapy is good communication" to read "Good communication is therapeutic"?
- 3 Have you ever seen a situation in which Rogers' method, or something like it, was used? Explain it.
- 4 How important do you consider a neutral third party to be in helping people of opposing views to understand one another?

- 5 Can it be said that obstacles to understanding between persons or groups are the only obstacles to amity and good personal relations?
- 6 Do you think that complete understanding between persons or groups is theoretically attainable? Do you think it would be desirable?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 How I learned to avoid quarrels
- 2 Human beings need to disagree
- 3 Debating is (or is not) a useful mode of thought.
- 4 How to cope with people who get too excited in group discussions
- 5 How international understandings have actually been achieved
- 6 Our family arguments

## BERTRAND RUSSELL

born 1872, English philosopher mathematician and author won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950 His many books include *The Conquest of Happiness*, *Education and the Modern World*, *Religion and Science*, and *The Impact of Science on Society* [From *The Conquest of Happiness* by Bertrand C Russell published by Lueright Publishing Corporation NJ, Copyright 1930 Horace Lueright Inc British publishers George Allen & Unwin Ltd]

## Zest

I propose to deal with what seems to me the most universal and distinctive mark of happy men, namely, zest.

Perhaps the best way to understand what is meant by zest will be to consider the different ways in which men behave when they sit down to a meal There are those to whom a meal is merely a bore, no matter how excellent the food may be, they feel that it is uninteresting They have had excellent food before, probably at almost every meal they have eaten They have never known what it was to go without a meal until hunger became a raging passion, but have come to regard meals as merely conventional occurrences, dictated by the fashions of the society in which they live Like everything else, meals are tiresome, but it is no use to make a fuss, because nothing else will be less tiresome Then there are the invalids who eat from a sense of duty, because the doctor has told them that it is necessary to take a little nourishment in order to keep up their strength Then there are the epicures, who start hopefully, but find that nothing has been quite so well cooked as it ought to have been Then there are the gormandizers, who fall



upon their food with eager rapacity, eat too much, and grow plethoric and stertorous. Finally there are those who begin with a sound appetite, are glad of their food, eat until they have had enough, and then stop. Those who are set down before the feast of life have similar attitudes towards the good things which it offers. The happy man corresponds to the last of our eaters. What hunger is in relation to food, zest is in relation to life. The man who is bored with his meals corresponds to the victim of Byronic unhappiness. The invalid who eats from a sense of duty corresponds to the ascetic, the gormandizer to the voluptuary. The epicure corresponds to the fastidious person who condemns half the pleasures of life as unæsthetic. Oddly enough all these types, with the possible exception of the gormandizer, despise the man of healthy appetite and consider themselves his superiors. It seems to them vulgar to enjoy food because you are hungry or to enjoy life because it offers a variety of interesting spectacles and surprising experiences. From the height of their disillusionment they look down upon those whom they despise as simple souls. For my part, I have no sympathy with this outlook. All disenchantment is to me a malady, which, it is true, certain circumstances may render inevitable, but which none the less, when it occurs, is to be cured as soon as possible, not to be regarded as a higher form of wisdom. Suppose one man likes straw berries and another does not, in what respect is the latter superior? There is no abstract and impersonal proof either that strawberries are good or that they are not good. To the man who likes them they are good, to the man who dislikes them they are not. But the man who likes them has a pleasure which the other does not have, to that extent his life is more enjoyable and he is better adapted to the world in which both must live. What is true in this trivial instance is equally true in more important matters. The man who enjoys watching football is to that extent superior to the man who does not. The man who enjoys reading is still more superior to the man who does not, since opportunities for reading are more frequent than opportunities for watching football. The more things a man is interested in, the more opportunities of happiness he has and the less he is at the mercy of fate since if he loses one thing he can fall back upon another. Life is too short to be interested in everything but it is good to be interested in as many things as are necessary to fill our days. We are all prone to the malady of the introvert, who, with the manifold spectacle of the world spread out before him, turns away and gazes only upon the emptiness within. But let us not imagine that there is anything grand about the introvert's unhappiness.

There were once upon a time two sausage machines, exquisitely constructed for the purpose of turning pig into the most delicious

sausages One of these retained his zest for pig and produced sausages innumerable, the other said "What is pig to me? My own works are far more interesting and wonderful than any pig" He refused pig and set to work to study his inside When bereft of its natural food, his inside ceased to function, and the more he studied it, the more empty and foolish it seemed to him to be All the exquisite apparatus by which the delicious transformation had hitherto been made stood still, and he was at a loss to guess what it was capable of doing This second sausage machine was like the man who has lost his zest, while the first was like the man who has retained it The mind is a strange machine which can combine the materials offered to it in the most astonishing ways, but without materials from the external world it is powerless, and unlike the sausage machine it must seize its materials for itself, since events only become experiences through the interest that we take in them if they do not interest us, we are making nothing of them The man, therefore, whose attention is turned within finds nothing worthy of his notice, whereas the man whose attention is turned outward can find within, in those rare moments when he examines his soul, the most varied and interesting assortment of ingredients being dissected and recombined into beautiful or instructive patterns

The forms of zest are innumerable Sherlock Holmes, it may be remembered, picked up a hat which he happened to find lying in the street After looking at it for a moment he remarked that its owner had come down in the world as the result of drink and that his wife was no longer so fond of him as she used to be Life could never be boring to a man to whom casual objects offered such a wealth of interest Think of the different things that may be noticed in the course of a country walk One man may be interested in the birds, another in the vegetation, another in the geology, yet another in the agriculture, and so on Any one of these things is interesting if it interests you, and, other things being equal, the man who is interested in any one of them is a man better adapted to the world than the man who is not interested

How extraordinarily different, again, are the attitudes of different people to their fellow men! One man, in the course of a long tram journey, will fail entirely to observe any of his fellow travelers, while another will have summed them all up, analyzed their characters, made a shrewd guess at their circumstances, and perhaps even ascertained the most secret histories of several of them People differ just as much in what they feel towards others as in what they ascertain about them Some men find almost everybody boring, others quickly and easily develop a friendly feeling towards those with whom they are brought in contact, unless there is some definite reason for feeling otherwise Take again such a matter as travel, some men will travel

through many countries, going always to the best hotels, eating exactly the same food as they would eat at home, meeting the same idle rich whom they would meet at home, conversing on the same topics upon which they converse at their own dinner table. When they return, their only feeling is one of relief at having done with the boredom of expensive locomotion. Other men wherever they go see what is characteristic, make the acquaintance of people who typify the locality, observe whatever is of interest either historically or socially, eat the food of the country, learn its manners and its language, and come home with a new stock of pleasant thoughts for winter evenings.

In all these different situations the man who has the zest for life has the advantage over the man who has none. Even unpleasant experiences have their uses to him. I am glad to have smelt a Chinese crowd and a Sicilian village, though I cannot pretend that my pleasure was very great at the moment. Adventurous men enjoy shipwrecks, mutinies, earthquakes, conflagrations, and all kinds of unpleasant experiences provided they do not go so far as to impair health. They say to themselves in an earthquake, for example, "So that is what an earthquake is like," and it gives them pleasure to have their knowledge of the world increased by this new item. It would not be true to say that such men are not at the mercy of fate, for if they should lose their health they would be very likely to lose their zest at the same time, though this is by no means certain. I have known men to die at the end of years of slow torture, and yet retain their zest almost till the last moment. Some forms of ill health destroy zest, others do not. I do not know whether the biochemists are able as yet to distinguish between these kinds. Perhaps when biochemistry has made further advances we shall all be able to take tablets that will ensure our feeling an interest in everything, but until that day comes we are compelled to depend upon common sense observation of life to judge what are the causes that enable some men to take an interest in everything, while compelling others to take an interest in nothing.

Zest is sometimes general, sometimes specialized. It may be very specialized indeed. Readers of *Borrow* may remember a character who occurs in "Lavengro." He had lost his wife, to whom he was devoted and felt for a time that life had grown utterly barren. But by profession he was a tea merchant, and in order to endure life he taught himself unaided to read the Chinese inscriptions on the tea chests that passed through his hands. In the end this gave him a new interest in life, and he began to study with avidity everything that concerned China. I have known men who were entirely absorbed in the endeavor to find out all about the Gnostic heresy, and other men whose principal interest lay in collating the manuscripts and early editions of Hobbes. It is quite

impossible to guess in advance what will interest a man, but most men are capable of a keen interest in something or other, and when once such an interest has been aroused their life becomes free from tedium. Very specialized interests are, however, a less satisfactory source of happiness than a general zest for life, since they can hardly fill the whole of a man's time, and there is always the danger that he may come to know all there is to know about the particular matter that has become his hobby.

It will be remembered that among our different types at the banquet we included the gormandizer, whom we were not prepared to praise. The reader may think that the man with zest whom we have been praising does not differ in any definable way from the gormandizer. The time has come when we must try to make the distinction between the two types more definite.

The ancients, as every one knows, regarded moderation as one of the essential virtues. Under the influence of romanticism and the French Revolution this view was abandoned by many, and overmastering passions were admired, even if, like those of Byron's heroes, they were of a destructive and antisocial kind. The ancients, however, were clearly in the right. In the good life there must be a balance between different activities, and no one of them must be carried so far as to make the others impossible. The gormandizer sacrifices all other pleasures to that of eating, and by so doing diminishes the total happiness of his life. Many other passions besides eating may be carried to a like excess. The Empress Josephine was a gormandizer in regard to clothes. At first Napoleon used to pay her dressmaker's bills, though with continually increasing protest. At last he told her that she really must learn moderation, and that in future he would only pay her bills when the amount seemed reasonable. When her next dressmaker's bill came in, she was for a moment at her wit's end, but presently she bethought herself of a scheme. She went to the War Minister and demanded that he should pay her bill out of the funds provided for the war. Since he knew that she had the power to get him dismissed he did so, and the French lost Genoa in consequence. So at least some books say, though I am not prepared to vouch for the exact truth of the story. For our purpose it is equally apt whether true or an exaggeration, since it serves to show how far the passion for clothes may carry a woman who has the opportunity to indulge it. Dipsomaniacs and nymphomaniacs are obvious examples of the same kind of thing. The principle in these matters is fairly obvious. All our separate tastes and desires have to fit into the general framework of life. If they are to be a source of happiness they must be compatible with health, with the affection of those whom we love, and with the respect of the society in which we live.

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Russell Zest

Some passions can be indulged to almost any extent without passing beyond these limits, others cannot. The man, let us say, who loves chess, if he happens to be a bachelor with independent means, need not restrict his passion in any degree, whereas if he has a wife and children and no independent means, he will have to restrict it very severely. The dipsomaniac and the gormandizer, even if they have no social ties, are unwise from a self-regarding point of view, since their indulgence interferes with health, and gives them hours of misery in return for minutes of pleasure. Certain things form a framework within which any separate passion must live if it is not to become a source of misery. Such things are health, the general possession of one's faculties, a sufficient income to provide for necessities, and the most essential social duties, such as those towards wife and children. The man who sacrifices these things for chess is essentially as bad as the dipsomaniac. The only reason we do not condemn him so severely is that he is much less common and that only a man of somewhat rare abilities is likely to be carried away by absorption in so intellectual a game. The Greek formula of moderation practically covers these cases. The man who likes chess sufficiently to look forward throughout his working day to the game that he will play in the evening is fortunate, but the man who gives up work in order to play chess all day has lost the virtue of moderation. It is recorded that Tolstoy, in his younger and unregenerate days, was awarded the military cross for valor in the field, but when the time came for him to be presented with it, he was so absorbed in a game of chess that he decided not to go. We can hardly find fault with Tolstoy on this account, since to him it might well be a matter of indifference whether he won military decorations or not, but in a lesser man such an act would have been one of folly.

As a limitation upon the doctrine that has just been set forth, it ought to be admitted that some performances are considered so essentially noble as to justify the sacrifice of everything else on their behalf. The man who loses his life in the defense of his country is not blamed if thereby his wife and children are left penniless. The man who is engaged in experiments with a view to some great scientific discovery or invention is not blamed afterwards for the poverty that he has made his family endure, provided that his efforts are crowned with ultimate success. If, however, he never succeeds in making the discovery or the invention that he was attempting, public opinion condemns him as a crank, which seems unfair, since no one in such an enterprise can be sure of success in advance. During the first millennium of the Christian era a man who abandoned his family for a saintly life was praised, though nowadays it would be held that he ought to make some provision for them.

I think there is always some deep seated psychological difference between the gormandizer and the man of healthy appetite. The man in whom one desire runs to excess at the expense of all others is usually a man with some deep seated trouble, who is seeking escape from a specter. In the case of the dipsomaniac this is obvious: men drink in order to forget. If they had no specters in their lives, they would not find drunkenness more agreeable than sobriety. As the legendary Chinaman said: "Me no drinkee for drinkee, me drinkee for drinkee." This is typical of all excessive and one sided passions. It is not pleasure in the object itself that is sought, but oblivion. There is, however, a very great difference according as oblivion is sought in a sottish manner or by the exercise of faculties in themselves desirable. Borrow's friend who taught himself Chinese in order to be able to endure the loss of his wife was seeking oblivion, but he sought it in an activity that had no harmful effects, but on the contrary improved his intelligence and his knowledge. Against such forms of escape there is nothing to be said. It is otherwise with the man who seeks oblivion in drinking or gambling or any other form of unprofitable excitement. There are, it is true, border line cases. What should we say of the man who runs mad risks in aeroplanes or on mountain tops, because life has become irksome to him? If his risks serve any public object, we may admire him, but if not, we shall have to place him only slightly above the gambler and drunkard.

Genuine zest, not the sort that is really a search for oblivion, is part of the natural make up of human beings except in so far as it has been destroyed by unfortunate circumstances. Young children are interested in almost everything that they see and hear, the world is full of surprises to them, and they are perpetually engaged with ardor in the pursuit of knowledge, not, of course of scholastic knowledge, but of the sort that consists in acquiring familiarity with the objects that attract their attention. Animals, even when adult, retain their zest provided they are in health. A cat in an unfamiliar room will not sit down until it has sniffed at every corner on the off chance that there may be a smell of mouse somewhere. The man who has never been fundamentally thwarted will retain his natural interest in the external world and so long as he retains it he will find life pleasant unless his liberty is unduly curtailed. Loss of zest in civilized society is very largely due to the restrictions upon liberty which are essential to our way of life. The savage hunts when he is hungry, and in so doing is obeying a direct impulse. The man who goes to his work every morning at a certain hour is actuated fundamentally by the same impulse, namely the need to secure a living, but in his case the impulse does not operate directly and at the moment when it is felt, it operates indirectly through abstractions, beliefs and volitions. At the moment when the man starts off to his work he is not feeling hungry, since

He has just had his breakfast. He merely knows that hunger will recur, and that going to his work is a means of satisfying future hunger. Impulses are irregular, whereas habits, in a civilized society, have to be regular. Among savages, even collective enterprises, in so far as they exist, are spontaneous and impulsive. When the tribe is going to war the tom tom rouses military ardor, and herd excitement inspires each individual to the necessary activity. Modern enterprises cannot be managed in this way. When a train has to be started at a given moment it is impossible to inspire the porters, the engine driver and the signalman by means of barbaric music. Each of them must do his job merely because it has to be done. Their motive, that is to say, is indirect: they have no impulse towards the activity, but only towards the ultimate reward of the activity. A great deal of social life has the same defect. People converse with each other, not from any wish to do so, but because of some ultimate benefit that they hope to derive from cooperation. At every moment of life the civilized man is hedged about by restrictions of impulse: if he happens to feel cheerful he must not sing or dance in the street, while if he happens to feel sad he must not sit on the pavement and weep, for fear of obstructing pedestrian traffic. In youth his liberty is restricted at school, in adult life it is restricted throughout his working hours. All this makes zest more difficult to retain, for the continual restraint tends to produce weariness and boredom. Nevertheless, a civilized society is impossible without a very considerable degree of restraint upon spontaneous impulse, since spontaneous impulse will only produce the simplest forms of social cooperation, not those highly complex forms which modern economic organization demands. In order to rise above these obstacles to zest a man needs health and superabundant energy, or else, if he has that good fortune, work that he finds interesting on its own account. Health, so far as statistics can show, has been steadily improving in all civilized countries during the last hundred years, but energy is more difficult to measure, and I am doubtful whether physical vigor in moments of health is as great as it was formerly. The problem here is to a great extent a social problem. Some men retain their zest in spite of the handicaps of civilized life, and many men could do so if they were free from the inner psychological conflicts upon which a great part of their energy is expended. Zest demands energy more than sufficient for the necessary work, and this in turn demands the smooth working of the psychological machine.

In women, less nowadays than formerly but still to a very large extent, zest has been greatly diminished by a mistaken conception of respectability. It was thought undesirable that women should take an obvious interest in men, or that they should display too much vivacity in public. In learning not to be interested in men they learned very frequently to be interested in nothing, or at any rate in nothing except a certain kind of

correct behavior To teach an attitude of inactivity and withdrawal towards life is clearly to teach something very inimical to zest, and to encourage a certain kind of absorption in self which is characteristic of highly respectable women, especially when they are uneducated They do not have the interest in sport that average men have, they care nothing about politics, towards men their attitude is one of prim aloofness, towards women their attitude is one of veiled hostility based upon the conviction that other women are less respectable than they are themselves They boast that they keep themselves to themselves, that is to say, their lack of interest in their fellow creatures appears to them in the light of a virtue For this of course they are not to blame, they are only accepting the moral teaching that has been current for thousands of years where women are concerned They are, however, victims, much to be pitied, of a system of repression whose iniquity they have failed to perceive To such women all that is ungenerous appears good and all that is generous appears evil In their own social circle they do what they can to kill joy, in politics they love repressive legislation Fortunately the type is growing less common, but it is still far more prevalent than is supposed by those who live in emancipated circles I recommend any one who doubts this statement to go the round of a number of lodging houses seeking a lodging, and to take note of the landladies that he will meet during his search He will find that they are living by a conception of female excellence which involves as an essential part the destruction of all zest for life, and that their minds and hearts are dwarfed and stunted as a result. Between male and female excellence rightly conceived there is no difference, or at any rate no difference such as tradition inculcates I for women as for men zest is the secret of happiness and well being

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENTS AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What are Russell's four classifications of eaters, and how do they symbolize attitudes toward life?
- 2 What are some of the things that "form a framework within which any separate passion must live if it is not to form a source of misery"?
- 3 Under what circumstances does Russell think it may be all right for a person to indulge one interest to an extreme degree?
- 4 What basic reason does he give for the loss of zest in civilized society?
- 5 From what does Russell believe an individual must free himself if he is to achieve, in civilized society the abundant energy necessary in order to live with zest?
- 6 Point out several instances in which Russell has used a concrete illustration in order to make a point, and explain how this device is useful.
- 7 Point out several instances in which Russell has apparently inverted illustrative anecdotes.



- 8 To what extent does he make use of the principle of comparison and contrast? Do you consider his use of this device essential to the article or not?
- 9 Does Russell include a definition of the word 'zest'? Explain the method by which he makes the reader fully aware of the meaning of the term

### FOR DISCUSSION

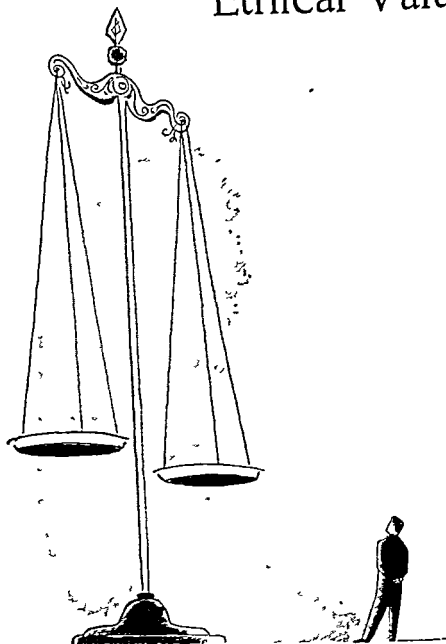
- 1 Are there dangers in becoming interested in too many things, as well as in too few?
- 2 Do you think the classical doctrine of moderation (the golden mean) is applicable in modern life? What are some of the forces in modern life that tend to keep a person from following this doctrine?
- 3 In your observation, what people or groups seem to have most zest for living?
- 4 In your opinion, do studying and class attendance in college help or hinder the expression of zest? Do sports? Do social activities? Does working at a job?
- 5 If literature has at least the negative value of keeping us from boredom, does it also have some positive values? If so, what are they? If watching sports events keeps us from boredom, does it also have some positive values? If so, what are they?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Zest in college does (or does not) depend on having money to spend
- 2 The most zestful person I know
- 3 Dating in college increases (or decreases) zest
- 4 A satisfying hobby
- 5 Exploring the world through books
- 6 Spectator sports versus participant sports

## *Chapter Fifteen*

# Ethical Values



PROVE ALL THINGS  
HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD

SAINT PAUL

## Introduction

Problems of value have to do with the judgment of what is worthwhile in life and in the world. Ethical values furnish the basis for conduct and involve ideas of what is the best thing to do under particular circumstances. What shall we seek to attain in life? What is our idea of success? What should be our relations with our fellow men? These are examples which illustrate the fact that questions of value are among the most significant in the world for everyone.

Even extremely thoughtless people indicate some kind of values by their actions. Usually, of course, they accept whatever guiding values seem to be approved by most of the people around them. If we agree, however, that a good life—and how to lead the good life—is one of the most important questions involving values—will require thought about our personal values as well as about those generally approved by the society in which we live, we shall not be satisfied with the uncritical acceptance of anyone else's ideas of worth as a guide to our own lives. These matters require our personal attention.

Questions of value have occupied thinkers in all ages, but today they seem particularly pressing. In the past most people in the Western world have based their values on supernatural sanctions. This has generally meant a code of conduct based on the values of the Hebrew-Christian tradition. Today, however, many people are at a loss for a firm basis on which to erect a system of values. They are confused about what they should do and about how they should judge what is happening in the world.

The loss of a firm sense of values has been greatly accelerated by two world wars. The uprooting of thousands of young people has never been conducive to the maintenance of established norms of conduct. When death is sudden and frequent, as in war, ideas of right and wrong are likely to shift. What was formerly thought important may well seem trivial in the face of tremendous events. It is not surprising, therefore, to find thoughtful persons pondering problems of ethics in an attempt to find a firm foundation for a tenable system of values. The writers in this section are among them.

Albert Schweitzer, famed as a practical humanitarian, medical mis-

sionary, and musicologist, surveys in the first article of this chapter, "The Problem of Ethics for Twentieth Century Man," the development of ethical ideas through the years. He stresses the influence of one's attitude toward the world and finds in whether that attitude is affirmative or negative a basic distinction between two great kinds of ethics, one of which advocates activity in the world and the other non activity. Our present civilization is the result of a combination of Christian attitudes and of the 'Renaissance's passionate affirmation of the world." Philosophy after the time of Hume has very generally agreed that "compassion" is the basic element in ethics. This, however, leaves unanswered the problem of how to reconcile our responsibilities to our selves and to others. Schweitzer finds an answer to this problem in respect for life as a guiding principle. "Through respect for life," he says, "we become pious in an elementary, deep, and living sense."

C S Lewis, teacher at Cambridge and author of widely read books on Christianity, attempts in the second article to find a basis for thinking about questions of ethical value without recourse to religious foundations. He uses his ethical analysis elsewhere as a basis for a belief in Christianity, but if we follow his argument here we arrive at a 'Law of Decent Behaviour" that is inherent in the universe. Lewis bases his argument on logical deductions from common ideas upon which he thinks all would agree. Simple though Lewis's point of view may seem, it touches the fundamental question of whether there is in the universe some indication of ethical values which are absolute, unchanging. If there is, the problem of determining what is valuable is quite different from what it would be if there were not.

Abba Hillel Silver, famous rabbi and author of the third article, "Prophetic Religion in World Culture," finds the roots of our modern confusion about values in our rejection of prophetic religion with its emphasis on respect for human life and a method of attaining good ends. Too often our attitudes toward each other have been those supposedly sanctioned by the necessities of the struggle for existence. Science is now finding that the survival of the fittest is not as scientific as was once supposed. The method of prophetic religion—"acceptance of a supreme moral law tempered by love"—has been too rarely tried. Silver calls for an organized effort on the part of religious people to try the

method of prophetic religion, to make effective a set of ethical values which have been too often neglected

Gilbert K Chesterton, who was a well known English author of essays and stories, presents in *The Return to Religion* the point of view of a distinguished Roman Catholic layman. According to his argument, science has completely failed to satisfy the aspirations of mankind, and men have returned to religion for the values which science has failed to provide. Chesterton contrasts the scepticism of science which he finds unproductive, with the power of religion to help men lead productive lives. In his paradoxical manner he points to religion as the true example of the survival of the fittest.

For our final point of view we turn to the South African novelist and social worker Alan Paton and his article *Religious Faith and Human Brotherhood*. Here again we find an emphasis on the necessity of veneration for personality, which Paton calls a divine implantment. This he sees as fundamental and he calls for a return to the divine pattern. This would result in unleashing the power of love, and love would result in the establishment of human brotherhood. As a result of his life in South Africa, Paton is able to illustrate his ideas from the situation existing there between white and Negro.

It is interesting to note how often in these articles the idea of respect for life, for personality, and for human beings is suggested as a basis for the establishment of values.

## ALBERT SCHWEITZER

born 1875 is a clergyman a medical missionary and a musicologist In 1913 he founded a hospital at Lamberene in French Equatorial Africa where he has served as missionary surgeon since its establishment He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952 In addition he has edited Bach's organ works and written a life of Bach as well as books on music and theology [From *The Saturday Review*, June 13 1953, reprinted by permission]

### *The Problem of Ethics for Twentieth Century Man*

The problem of ethics in the evolution of human thought cannot of course be dealt with exhaustively within the scope of the present article By singling out the main features of this evolution, however, we can perhaps appreciate all the more clearly the nature of the role which ethics has played in the history of man's thinking

What we call 'ethics' and 'morality'—which are terms borrowed from the Greek and the Latin respectively—may be broadly defined as our good behavior toward ourselves and other beings We feel the obligation to concern ourselves not solely with our own well being, but also with that of others and of human society It is in the notion of the scope of this solidarity with others that the first evolution to be observed in the development of ethics occurs

For the primitive the circle of solidarity is restricted It is limited to those whom he can consider as in some way related to him by consanguinity, that is to say, to the members of his tribe, which he regards as a larger family I speak from experience In my hospital I have primitives When I have occasion to ask a patient of this category to render some small services to a bedridden fellow patient, he will oblige only if the latter belongs to his tribe If this is not the case, he will reply quite candidly, 'This not brother for me' No amount of persuasion and no kind of threat will budge him from his refusal to do that unimaginable thing putting himself out for a stranger I am the one who has to give in

However, as man begins to reflect upon himself and his behavior toward others, he comes to realize that man as such is his fellow and his neighbor In the course of a long evolutionary process he sees the circle of his responsibilities widen until it includes all the human beings with whom he has any association

This clearer knowledge of ethics was achieved by the Chinese thinkers

—Lao Tse, born in 604 B C, Kung Tsu (Confucius), 551-479 B C, Meng Tsu, 372-289 B C, and Chuang Tsu, in the fourth century B C — and by the Hebrew prophets Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah of the eighth century B C The idea enounced by Jesus and Saint Paul that man owes himself to every human being is an integral part of Christian ethics

For the great thinkers of India, whether they belong to Brahmanism, to Buddhism, or to Hinduism, the idea of brotherhood of all human beings is contained in their metaphysical notion of existence But they encounter difficulties in incorporating it in their ethics They are unable, in fact, to abolish the dividing walls between men erected by the existence of different castes and sanctioned by tradition Zoroaster, who lived in the seventh century B C, was prevented from arriving at the notion of the brotherhood of men because he had to make the distinction between those who believed in Ormuzd, the god of light and good, whom he heralded, and the unbelievers who remained under the sway of demons He required believers, fighting for the coming of the reign of Ormuzd, to consider unbelievers as enemies and to treat them accordingly To understand this position one must remember that the believers were the tribes of Bactrians who had become sedentary and aspired to live as honest and peaceful tillers of the soil, and that the unbelievers were the tribes which had remained nomadic, inhabiting the desert regions and living by pillage

Plato and Aristotle, and with them the other thinkers of the classic period of Greek philosophy, consider only the Greek human being—a free man who is not under the necessity of earning his livelihood Those who do not belong to this aristocracy are regarded by them as men of inferior quality in whom one need not be interested

It was only in the course of the second period of Greek thought, that of the simultaneous flowering of Stoicism and Epicureanism, that the idea of the equality of men and of the interest attaching to the human being as such was recognized by the representatives of the two schools The most remarkable proponent of this new conception is the Stoic Panaetius, who lived in the second century (180-110 B C) He is the prophet of humanism The idea of the brotherhood of men does not become popular in antiquity But the fact that philosophy should have proclaimed it as a conception dictated by reason is of great importance for its future

It must be admitted, however, that the idea that the human being as such has a right to our interest has never enjoyed the full authority to which it might lay claim Until our day it has been and continues to be constantly compromised by the importance assumed by differences of race, of religious belief, of nationality which cause us to regard our fellow being as a stranger to whom we owe only indifference, if not contempt

On undertaking to analyze the development of ethics one is led to



give one's attention to the influence exerted upon ethics by the particular conception of the world to which it is related. There is, in fact, a fundamental difference between these various conceptions.

The difference stems from the manner in which the world itself is appraised. Some view it as inviting an affirmative attitude, which means interesting oneself in the things of this world and in the life we lead in it. Others, on the contrary, advocate an extraordinary negative attitude. They recommend that we dissociate ourselves from everything which concerns the world, including the existence which is ours upon this earth.

Affirmation is in conformity with our natural feeling; negation is opposed to it. Affirmation invites us to make a place for ourselves in the world and to engage in action; negation commits us to live in it as strangers and to choose non-activity.

Ethics, by its very nature, is linked to the affirmation of the world. It is a response to the need to be active in order to serve the idea of good. It follows from this that the affirmation of the world favorably influences the development of ethics and that negation, on the contrary, impedes it. In the former case ethics can offer itself for what it is; in the latter it must relinquish its claims.

The negation of the world is professed by the thinkers of India and by the Christianity of antiquity and of the Middle Ages; affirmation by the Chinese thinkers, the Hebrew prophets, Zoroaster, and European thinkers of the Renaissance and of modern times.

Among the thinkers of India this negative conception of the world is the consequence of their conviction that true existence is immaterial, immutable, and eternal, and that the existence of the material world is unreal, deceptive, and transitory. The world which we are pleased to consider as real is for them but a mirage of the immaterial world in time and in space. It is wrong for man to interest himself in this phantasmagoria and in the role he plays in it. The only behavior compatible with a true knowledge of the nature of existence is non-activity. In a certain measure non-activity has an ethical character. In detaching himself from the things of this world man renounces the egoism which material interests and vulgar appetite inspire in him. Moreover, non-activity means non-violence. It preserves man from the danger of doing harm to others by acts of violence.

The philosophers of Brahmanism, of Sankhya, of Jainism, like Buddha, exalt non-violence, which they call "ahimsa" and which they consider the sublime ethics. Nevertheless, it is imperfect and incomplete. It allows man the egoism of devoting himself entirely to the salvation which he hopes to gain by leading a kind of life which conforms to the true knowledge of the nature of existence; it does not command him in the name of compassion, but in the name of metaphysical theories; it de-

mands only abstention from evil and not the activity which is inspired by the notion of good. Only the ethics which is allied to the affirmation of the world can be natural and complete. If, then, the ethics of the philosophers of India should venture to yield to the promptings of a more generous ethics than that of ahimsa, it will be able to do so only by making concessions to the affirmation of the world and to the principle of activity. Buddha, who takes a stand against the coldness of the Brahman doctrine by preaching pity, has difficulty in resisting the temptation of emancipating himself from the principle of non-activity. He succumbs to it more than once, unable to help committing acts of charity or recommending them to his disciples. Under the cover of ethics the affirmation of the world wages a hidden struggle in India through the centuries against the principle of non-activity. In Hinduism, which is a religious reaction from the exigencies of Brahmanism, this affirmation succeeds in making itself recognized as the equal of non-activity. The understanding between them is proclaimed and specified in the Bhagavad Gita, a didactic poem incorporated in the great epic of the Mahabharata.

The Bhagavad-Gita admits Brahmanism's conception of the world. It recognizes that the material world has only a deceptive reality and cannot lay claim to our interest. It is only a diverting show to which God treats himself. Man may, therefore, with good reason believe himself to be entitled to take part in this spectacle only in the capacity of a spectator. But by the same token he has the right to consider himself called upon to play his role as an actor in the play. Activity is thus justified by the spirit in which it operates. The man who practises it with the sole intention of fulfilling the will of God pursues the truth, even as does he who chooses non-activity. On the other hand, ingenuous activity, which interests itself in this unreal world and undertakes to carry out in it any purpose whatever, is wrong and cannot be justified.

This theory which legitimizes activity by a logic resting on the idea that the world is but a show staged by God for his own enjoyment can in no way give satisfaction to true ethics, to that ethics which asserts the need to be active. The theory, nevertheless, enabled ethics to maintain itself in the Indies at a period when its existence was threatened by Brahmanism.

In our day the philosophers of India make great concessions to the principle of activity by invoking the fact that it is to be found also in the Upanishads. This is correct. The explanation is that the Aryans of India, in ancient times, as the Veda hymns tell us, led an existence filled with a naive joy of living. The Brahman doctrine of the negation of the world makes its appearance, alongside of the affirmation, only in the Upanishads, sacred texts belonging to the beginning of the first millennium before Christ.

The Christianity of antiquity and of the Middle Ages professes the negation of the world, without however drawing from it the conclusion of non activity. This peculiarity stems from the fact that its negation of the world is of a different nature from that of the philosophers of India. According to its doctrine the world in which we live is not a phantasmagoria, but an imperfect world, destined to be transformed into the perfect world of the Kingdom of God. The idea of the Kingdom of God was created by the Hebrew prophets of the eighth century B.C. It is this idea also which is at the center of the religion of Zoroaster in the seventh century.

Jesus announced the imminence of the transformation of the material world into the world of the Kingdom of God. He exhorted men to seek the perfection required for participation in the new existence in the new world. He asked man to detach himself from the things of this world in order to occupy himself solely with the practice of good. He allowed him to hold aloof from the world, but not from his duties toward men. In his ethics activity preserves all its rights and all its obligations. Herein is where it differs from that of Buddha, with which it has in common the idea of compassion. Because it is animated by the spirit of activity the ethics of Christianity maintains an affinity with affirmation of the world.

The transformation of the world into that of the Kingdom of God, which the first Christians regarded as near at hand, did not take place. During antiquity and the Middle Ages Christianity thus remains in the situation of having to despair of this world, without the hope of seeing the coming of the other—the hope which had sustained the first Christians. It would have been natural for Christianity then to come round to the affirmation of the world. Its active ethics made it possible for it to do so. But in antiquity and in the Middle Ages there did not exist a passionate affirmation of the world which alone would have served its purpose. This passionate affirmation came into being with the Renaissance. Christianity joined forces with it in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its ethics, along with the ideal of self-perfection which it derived from Jesus, henceforth embraced also the other, which consists in creating new and better material and spiritual conditions for the existence of human society. From this time on Christian ethics was able to give an objective to its activity and thus achieved its full development. From the union of Christianity and the Renaissance's passionate affirmation of the world was born the civilization in which we live and which we have to maintain and to perfect. The ethical conceptions of the Chinese philosophers and that of Zoroaster were from their origin linked with the affirmation of the world. They too bear within themselves the energies capable of producing an ethical civilization.

Having reached a certain level ethics tends to develop depth. This

an enthusiasm which it did not possess up to that time Under the influence of philosophy the ethics of Christianity for its part began to reflect upon what it owed to itself and upon what it must accomplish in this world Thus was born a spirit which could not permit the ethics of love to tolerate any longer the injustices, the cruelties, and the harmful superstitions which it had previously allowed Torture was abolished, the scourge of sorcery trials came to an end, inhuman laws gave way to more human ones A reform movement unprecedented in the history of humanity was undertaken and accomplished in the first enthusiasm of the discovery that the principle of love is taught also by reason

To demonstrate the rationality of altruism, the love of others, eighteenth-century philosophers, including Hartley, the Baron d'Holbach, Helvetius, and Bentham, well meaningly invoked the single argument of its utility The Chinese thinkers and the representatives of ethical Stoicism had also brought forward this argument, but had advanced others as well According to the thesis defended by these eighteenth century thinkers, altruism could be regarded simply as enlightened self-interest, taking into account the fact that the well-being of individuals and of society can be assured only by the devotion men show toward their fellows With this superficial thesis Kant and the Scots philosopher David Hume, among others, took sharp issue Kant, in his eagerness to defend the dignity of ethics, goes so far as to claim that its utility must not be taken into consideration However manifest it may be, it must not be allowed as a motive of ethics Ethics, according to the doctrine of the categorical imperative, commands in an absolute fashion It is our conscience which reveals to us what is right and what is wrong We have merely to obey it The moral law which we bear within ourselves gives us the certainty that we belong not only to the world as it appears to us in time and in space, but that we are at the same time citizens of the world as such, the spiritual world

Hume, in order to refute the utilitarian thesis, proceeds empirically He analyzes the motives of ethics and reaches the conclusion that it is above all a matter of feeling Nature, he argues, has endowed us with the faculty of sympathy The latter enables us and obliges us to experience the joy, the apprehensions, and the sufferings of others as our own We are, according to an image used by Hume, like strings vibrating in unison with those which are played It is this sympathy which leads us to devote ourselves to others and to wish to contribute to their well-being and to that of society Philosophy since Hume—if we leave aside Nietzsche's venture—has not dared seriously to question the concept that ethics is above all a matter of compassion

But where does this leave ethics? Is it capable of defining and of limit-

ing the obligations of devotion to others and thus reconciling egoism and altruism, as the theory of utilitarianism attempted to do?

Hume hardly considers the question. Neither have succeeding philosophers judged it necessary to take into consideration the consequences of the principle of devotion through compassion. It is as though they sensed that these consequences might prove somewhat troublesome. And so indeed they are. The ethics of devotion through compassion no longer has the character of a law which we should like to continue to attribute to it. It no longer involves clearly established and clearly formulated commandments. It is fundamentally subjective, because it leaves to each one of us the responsibility of deciding how far he shall go in devotion.

Not only does the ethics of devotion cease to prescribe in a precise fashion, it becomes by degrees less disposed to confine itself to the realm of the possible, as the law must do. It is constantly obliging us to attempt the impossible, to push devotion to the point of compromising our very existence. In the dreadful times which we have lived through many such situations arose, and many were those who sacrificed themselves for others. Even in everyday life the ethics of devotion, if it does not go to the length of demanding this ultimate sacrifice, often requires each one of us to abdicate interests, and to give up advantages out of regard for others. But too often we manage to silence our conscience, which is the guardian of our sense of responsibility. How many are the conflicts in which the ethics of devotion abandons us to ourselves. Those who manage enterprises rarely have occasion to congratulate themselves on having, out of compassion, given employment to someone who urgently needed it instead of entrusting it to the most qualified. But woe to them if they should believe themselves warranted by experiences of this kind never again to take heed of the argument of compassion.

There is a final consequence to be drawn from the principle of devotion: it no longer allows us to concern ourselves solely with human beings, but obliges us to act in the same way toward all living beings whose fate may be influenced by us. They too are our fellow creatures by the fact they experience as we do an aspiration to happiness, as well as fear and suffering, and like us dread annihilation.

The man who has preserved his sensibility intact finds it altogether natural to have pity for all living beings. Why can philosophy not make up its mind to recognize that our behavior toward them must form an integral part of the ethics which it teaches? The reason is quite simple. Philosophy fears, and rightly so, that this immense enlargement of the circle of our responsibilities will deprive ethics of the slight hope it still has of being able to formulate commandments in a way that is at all reasonable and satisfying. Indeed, concern with the fate of all the beings

with whom we have to deal creates even more numerous and more troublesome conflicts for us than those of devotion limited to human beings. In respect to creatures we find ourselves constantly in situations which oblige us to cause suffering and to impair life. The peasant cannot let all the animals born in his flock survive, he can keep only those he can feed and which it will pay him to raise. In many cases we even face the necessity of sacrificing lives to save others. A man who picks up a stray bird finds himself obliged to kill insects or fish to feed it. In acting thus he is completely in the realm of the arbitrary. By what right does he sacrifice many lives in order to save a single life? In exterminating animals which he regards as harmful in order to protect others he likewise falls into the realm of the arbitrary.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon each one of us to judge whether we find ourselves under the unavoidable necessity of inflicting suffering and of killing, and to resign ourselves to becoming guilty by necessity. As for forgiveness, we must seek it by missing no opportunity to succor living beings. How much better off we should be if men would reflect on the kindness which they owe to creatures and would abstain from all the harm they do them through heedlessness. The fight against the inhuman traditions and the inhuman feelings which are still current in our day is one which our civilization must wage, if we have any concern for our self respect.

Among the inhuman customs which our civilization and our sentiment owe it to themselves no longer to tolerate I cannot refrain from naming two: bullfighting, with the kill, and stag hunting. Thus it is the requirement of compassion toward all living beings which makes ethics as complete as it must be.

There has been another great change in the situation of ethics: it is today no longer able to count on the support of a conception of the world which can serve as its justification.

At all times it has been convinced that it was merely exacting the behavior conforming to the knowledge of the true nature of the universal will which manifests itself in creation. This is the conviction on which not only religion but also the rationalist philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are based. But it so happens that the conception of the world which ethics can invoke is the result of the interpretation of the very world to which ethics has offered, and still offers, itself. It attributes to the universal will qualities and intentions which give satisfaction to its own way of feeling and of judging. But in the course of the nineteenth century the research which allowed itself to be guided solely by concern for truth was bound to surrender to the evidence that ethics can expect nothing from a true knowledge of the world. The progress of science consists in an increasingly precise observation of the processes

of nature. These allow us to harness the energies manifesting themselves in the universe to our own uses. But they oblige us at the same time increasingly to give up any attempt to understand its intentions. The world offers us the disconcerting spectacle of the will to life in conflict with itself. One existence maintains itself at the expense of another.

How can the ethics of devotion maintain itself without being sustained by a notion of the world which justifies it? It seems destined to founder in skepticism. This, however, is not the fate to which it is dedicated. In its beginnings ethics had to appeal to a conception of the world which would satisfy it. Having arrived at the knowledge that its fundamental principle is devotion, it becomes fully conscious of itself and thereby becomes autonomous.

We are in a position to understand its origins and its basis by meditating on the world and on ourselves.

We lack a complete and satisfying knowledge of the world. We are reduced to the simple observation that everything in it is life, like ourselves, and that all life is mystery. Our true knowledge of the world consists in being penetrated by the mystery of existence and of life. This mystery becomes only more mysterious as scientific research progresses. Being penetrated by the mystery of life corresponds to what in the language of mysticism is called 'learned ignorance,' which at least has knowledge of the essential.

The immediate datum of our consciousness, to which we come back each time we desire to achieve an understanding of ourselves and of our situation in the world, is 'I am life which wants to live, surrounded by life which wants to live.'

Being will to-life, I feel the obligation to respect all will to-life about me as equal to my own.

The fundamental idea of good is thus that it consists in preserving life, in favoring it, in wanting to bring it to its highest value, and evil consists in destroying life, doing it injury, hindering its development.

The principle of this veneration of life corresponds to that of love, as it has been discovered by religion and philosophy which sought to understand the fundamental notion of good.

The term 'respect for life' is broader and because of this more colorless than that of love. But it bears the same energies within it.

This essentially philosophical notion of good has also the advantage of being more complete than that of love. Love includes only our obligation toward other beings, but not those toward ourselves. One cannot deduce from it, for example, the quality of veracity, a primordial quality of the ethical personality along with that of compassion. The respect which man owes to his own life imposes upon him that he be faithful

to himself by renouncing every kind of dissimulation to which he might be tempted to resort in a given circumstance.

Through respect for life we enter into a spiritual relationship with the world. All the efforts undertaken by philosophy which built up grandiose systems to bring us into relation with the Absolute have remained vain. The Absolute is so abstract in character that we cannot communicate with it. It is not given to us to put ourselves at the disposal of the infinite and inscrutable creative will which is the basis of all existence, by having an understanding of its nature and its intentions. But we enter into spiritual relationship with it by feeling ourselves under the impression of the mystery of life and by devoting ourselves to all the living beings whom we have the occasion and the power to serve. The ethics which obliges us solely to concern ourselves with men and society cannot have this meaning. Only that which is universal in obliging us to concern ourselves with all beings brings us truly into relationship with the Universe and the will which manifests itself in it.

In the world the will-to-life is in conflict with itself. In us, through a mystery which we do not understand, it wishes to be at peace with itself. In the world it manifests itself, in us it reveals itself. It reveals to us, among other things, that the world is our spiritual destiny. By conforming to it we live our existence instead of submitting to it. Through respect for life we become pious in an elementary, deep, and living sense.

#### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. What does Schweitzer mean by the expression "solidarity with others"?
2. Explain how ethics depends, in his view, on "affirmation of the world," and cannot depend on "negation of the world."
3. For what reasons does he believe that the Renaissance, in conjunction with Christianity, made an ethical civilization possible?
4. Explain what is meant by "the rationality of altruism." Explain what is meant by "the concept that ethics is above all a matter of compassion."
5. Why does Schweitzer believe that we should behave compassionately toward all living beings, including the non human?
6. Why does he believe that "respect for life" is the means by which we enter into a spiritual relationship with the world?
7. Into what two large parts can this essay be divided?
8. Comment on the style of this essay. Is it relatively specific and concrete, or abstract and general? Is it, therefore, relatively easy or difficult to read?
9. Find several places in which Schweitzer explicitly points out what he is saying or is going to say.
10. Where and how has Schweitzer used definition in the development of his essay?



- 11 How does Schweitzer use contrast to make one facet of his meaning clear?
- 12 To what extent does Schweitzer attempt to make his ideas acceptable to the reader?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 In what specific ways would American life be different if Schweitzer's ethical ideal were realized?
- 2 Schweitzer mentions some obvious difficulties in carrying out the ethical ideal of "respect for life." What are some other difficulties which are likely to arise in following such an ideal?
- 3 What do you think of the doctrine of "enlightened self interest"? Are there any ways in which it seems to you unsatisfactory?
- 4 Does Schweitzer's ethical ideal seem realistic and useful, or visionary and impractical?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 Kindness to animals should (or should not) be limited to certain animals
- 2 We should (or should not) wait until men have learned kindness to men before including all living beings within the circle of compassion
- 3 The kindest act I ever saw
- 4 People ought to work or go hungry public relief is no kindness (true or false)

### C. S. LEWIS

born 1898 Professor of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge University is the author of the widely read *The Screwtape Letters* and other books on Christianity as well as science fiction and works of literary scholarship [This selection is from *The Case for Christianity* by C. S. Lewis, Copyright 1951 by The Macmillan Company and used with the publishers' permission, British publishers Geoffrey Bles Ltd.]

## *Right and Wrong as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe*

### I

Every one has heard people quarrelling. Sometimes it sounds funny and sometimes it sounds merely unpleasant, but however it sounds, I believe we can learn something very important from listening to the

kind of things they say. They say things like this: "That's my seat, I was there first"—"Leave him alone, he isn't doing you any harm"—"Why should you shove in first?"—"Give me a bit of your orange, I gave you a bit of mine"—"How'd you like it if anyone did the same to you?"—"Come on, you promised." People say things like that every day, educated people as well as uneducated, and children as well as grown-ups.

Now what interests me about all these remarks is that the man who makes them isn't just saying that the other man's behaviour doesn't happen to please him. He is appealing to some kind of standard of behaviour which he expects the other man to know about. And the other man very seldom replies, "To hell with your standard." Nearly always he tries to make out that what he has been doing doesn't really go against the standard, or that if it does, there is some special excuse. He pretends there is some special reason in this particular case why the person who took the seat first should not keep it, or that things were quite different when he was given the bit of orange, or that something has turned up which lets him off keeping his promise. It looks, in fact, very much as if both parties had in mind some kind of Law or Rule of fair play or decent behaviour or morality or whatever you like to call it, about which they really agreed. And they have. If they hadn't, they might, of course, fight like animals, but they couldn't *quarrel* in the human sense of the word. Quarrelling means trying to show that the other man's in the wrong. And there'd be no sense in trying to do that unless you and he had some sort of agreement as to what Right and Wrong are, just as there'd be no sense in saying that a footballer had committed a foul unless there was some agreement about the rules of football.

Now this Law or Rule about Right and Wrong used to be called the Law of Nature. Nowadays, when we talk of the 'laws of nature' we usually mean things like gravitation, or heredity, or the laws of chemistry. But when the older thinkers called the Law of Right and Wrong the Law of Nature, they really meant the Law of *Human* Nature. The idea was that, just as falling stones are governed by the law of gravitation and chemicals by chemical laws, so the creature called man also had *his* law—with this great difference, that the stone couldn't choose whether it obeyed the law of gravitation or not, but a man could choose either to obey the Law of Human Nature or to disobey it. They called it Law of Nature because they thought that every one knew it by nature and didn't need to be taught it. They didn't mean, of course, that you mightn't find an odd individual here and there who didn't know it, just as you find a few people who are colour-blind or have no ear for a tune. But taking the race as a whole, they thought that the human idea of Decent Behaviour was obvious to every one. And I believe they were right. If they weren't then all the things we say about this war [World War II] are

nonsense What is the sense in saying the enemy are in the wrong unless Right is a real thing which the Germans at bottom know as well as we do and ought to practise? If they had no notion of what we mean by right, then, though we might still have to fight them, we could no more blame them for that than for the colour of their hair

I know that some people say the idea of a Law of Nature or decent behaviour known to all men is unsound, because different civilisations and different ages have had quite different moralities But they haven't They have only had *slightly* different moralities Just think what a *quite* different morality would mean Think of a country where people were *admired* for running away in battle, or where a man felt *proud* for double-crossing all the people who had been kindest to him You might just as well try to imagine a country where two and two made five Men have differed as regards what people you ought to be unselfish to—whether it was only your own family, or your fellow countrymen, or every one But they have always agreed that you oughtn't to put yourself first Selfishness has never been admired Men have differed as to whether you should have one wife or four But they have always agreed that you mustn't simply have any woman you liked

But the most remarkable thing is this Whenever you find a man who says he doesn't believe in a real Right and Wrong, you will find the same man going back on this a moment later He may break his promise to you, but if you try breaking one to him he'll be complaining 'It's not fair' before you can say Jack Robinson A nation may say treaties don't matter, but then, next minute, they spoil their case by saying that the particular treaty they want to break was an unfair one But if treaties don't matter, and if there's no such thing as Right and Wrong—in other words, if there is no Law of Nature—what is the difference between a fair treaty and an unfair one? Haven't they given away the fact that, whatever they say, they really know the Law of Nature just like any-one else?

It seems, then, we are forced to believe in a real Right and Wrong People may be sometimes mistaken about them, just as people sometimes get their sums wrong, but they are not a matter of mere taste and opinion any more than the multiplication table Now if we're agreed about that, I go on to my next point, which is this None of us are really keeping the Law of Nature If there are any exceptions among you I apologise to them They'd better switch on to another station, for nothing I'm going to say concerns them And now, turning to the ordinary human beings who are left

I hope you won't misunderstand what I'm going to say I'm not preaching, and Heaven knows I'm not pretending that I'm better than anyone else I'm only trying to call attention to a fact, the fact that this year, or

this month, or, more likely, this very day, we have failed to practise ourselves the kind of behaviour we expect from other people. There may be all sorts of excuses for us. That time you were so unfair to the children was when you were very tired. That slightly shady business about the money—the one you've almost forgotten—came when you were very hard up. And what you promised to do for old So-and-so and have never done—well, you never would have promised if you'd known how frightfully busy you were going to be. And as for your behaviour to your wife (or husband), if I knew how irritating they could be, I wouldn't wonder at it—and who the dickens am I, anyway? I am just the same. That is to say, I don't succeed in keeping the Law of Nature very well, and the moment anyone tells me I'm not keeping it, there starts up in my mind a string of excuses as long as your arm. The question at the moment is not whether they are good excuses. The point is that they are one more proof of how deeply, whether we like it or not, we believe in the Law of Nature. If we didn't believe in decent behaviour, why should we be so anxious to make excuses for not having behaved decently? The truth is, we believe in decency so much—we feel the Rule or Law pressing on us so—that we can't bear to face the fact that we're breaking it, and consequently we try to shift the responsibility. For you notice that it's only for our bad behaviour that we find all these explanations. We put our *bad* temper down to being tired or worried or hungry, we put our good temper down to ourselves.

Well, those are the two points I wanted to make tonight. First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they *ought* to behave in a certain way, and can't really get rid of it. Secondly, that they don't in fact behave in that way. They know the Law of Nature, they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in.

## 2

If they are the foundation, I had better stop to make that foundation firm before I go on. Some of the letters I have had from listeners show that a good many people find it difficult to understand just what this Law of Human Nature, or Moral Law, or Rule of Decent Behaviour is.

For example, some people write to me saying, "Isn't what you call the Moral Law simply our herd instinct and hasn't it been developed just like all our other instincts?" Now I don't deny that we may have a herd instinct, but that isn't what I mean by the Moral Law. We all know what it feels like to be prompted by instinct—by mother love, or sexual instinct, or the instinct for food. It means you feel a strong want or desire

to act in a certain way And, of course, we sometimes do feel just that sort of desire to help another person and no doubt that desire is due to the herd instinct But feeling a desire to help is quite different from feeling that you ought to help whether you want to or not Supposing you hear a cry for help from a man in danger You will probably feel two desires—one a desire to give help (due to your herd instinct), the other a desire to keep out of danger (due to the instinct for self preservation) But you will find inside you, in addition to these two impulses, a third thing which tells you that you ought to follow the impulse to help, and suppress the impulse to run away Now this thing that judges between two instincts, that decides which should be encouraged, can't itself be either of them You might as well say that the sheet of music which tells you, at a given moment, to play one note on the piano and not another, is itself one of the notes on the keyboard The Moral Law is, so to speak, the tune we've got to play our instincts are merely the keys

Another way of seeing that the Moral Law is not simply one of our instincts is this If two instincts are in conflict, and there is nothing in a creature's mind except those two instincts, obviously the stronger of the two must win But at those moments when we are most conscious of the Moral Law, it usually seems to be telling us to side with the weaker of the two impulses You probably *want* to be safe much more than you want to help the man who is drowning but the Moral Law tells you to help him all the same And doesn't it often tell us to try to make the right impulse stronger than it naturally is? I mean, we often feel it our duty to stimulate the herd instinct, by waking up our imaginations and arousing our pity and so on, so as to get up enough steam for doing the right thing But surely we are not acting *from* instinct when we set about making an instinct stronger than it is? The thing that says to you, 'Your herd instinct is asleep Wake it up,' can't itself *be* the herd instinct. The thing that tells you which note on the piano needs to be played louder can't itself be that note!

Here is a third way of seeing it If the Moral Law was one of our instincts, we ought to be able to point to some one impulse inside us which was always what we call 'good,' always in agreement with the rule of right behaviour But you can't There is none of our impulses which the Moral Law won't sometimes tell us to suppress, and none which it won't sometimes tell us to encourage It is a mistake to think that some of our impulses—say, mother love or patriotism—are good, and others, like sex or the fighting instinct, are bad All we mean is that the occasions on which the fighting instinct or the sexual desire need to be restrained are rather more frequent than those for restraining mother love or patriotism But there are situations in which it is the duty of a married man to encourage his sexual impulse and of a soldier to

encourage the fighting instinct. There are also occasions on which a mother's love for her own children or a man's love for his own country have to be suppressed or they'll lead to unfairness towards other people's children or countries. Strictly speaking, there aren't such things as good and bad impulses. Think once again of a piano. It hasn't got two kinds of notes on it, the 'right' notes and the 'wrong' ones. Every single note is right at one time and wrong at another. The Moral Law isn't any one instinct or any set of instincts. It is something which makes a kind of tune (the tune we call goodness or right conduct) by directing the instincts.

By the way, this point is of great practical consequence. The most dangerous thing you can do is to take any one impulse of your own nature and set it up as the thing you ought to follow at all costs. There's not one of them which won't make us into devils if we set it up as an absolute guide. You might think love of humanity in general was safe, but it isn't. If you leave out justice you'll find yourself breaking agreements and faking evidence in trials 'for the sake of humanity,' and become in the end a cruel and treacherous man.

Other people write to me saying, "Isn't what you call the Moral Law just a social convention, something that is put into us by education?" I think there is a misunderstanding here. The people who ask that question are usually taking it for granted that if we have learned a thing from parents and teachers, then that thing must be merely a human invention. But, of course, that isn't so. We all learned the multiplication table at school. A child who grew up alone on a desert island wouldn't know it. But surely it doesn't follow that the multiplication table is simply a human convention, something human beings have made up for themselves and might have made different if they had liked? *Of course* we learn the Rule of Decent Behaviour from parents and teachers, as we learn everything else. But some of the things we learn are mere convention which might have been different—we learn to keep to the left of the road, but it might just as well have been the rule to keep to the right—and others of them, like mathematics, are real truths. The question is which class the Law of Human Nature belongs to.

There are two reasons for saying it belongs to the same class as mathematics. The first is, as I said last time, that though there are differences between the moral ideas of one time or country and those of another, the differences aren't really very big—you can recognise the same Law running through them all, whereas mere conventions—like the rule of the road or the kind of clothes people wear—differ completely. The other reason is this. When you think about these differences between the morality of one people and another, do you think that the morality of one people is ever better or worse than that of another? Have any of

the changes been improvements? If not, then of course there could never be any moral progress. Progress means not just changing, but changing for the better. If no set of moral ideas were truer or better than any other there would be no sense in preferring civilised morality to savage morality, or Christian morality to Nazi morality. In fact, of course, we all do believe that some moralities are better than others. We do believe that some of the people who tried to change the moral ideas of their own age were what we'd call Reformers or Pioneers—people who understood morality better than their neighbours did. Very well then. The moment you say that one set of moral ideas can be better than another, you are, in fact, measuring them both by a standard, saying that one of them conforms to that standard more nearly than the other. But the standard that measures two things is something different from either. You are, in fact, comparing them both with some Real Morality, admitting that there is *really* such a thing as Right, independent of what people think, and that some people's ideas get nearer to that real Right than others. Or put it this way. If your moral ideas can be truer, and those of the Nazis less true, there must be something—some Real Morality—for them to be true *about*. The reason why your idea of New York can be truer or less true than mine is that New York is a real place, existing quite apart from what either of us thinks. If when each of us said 'New York' each meant merely 'The town I am imagining in my own head,' how could one of us have truer ideas than the other? There'd be no question of truth or falsehood at all. In the same way, if the Rule of Decent Behaviour meant simply, "whatever each nation happens to approve," there'd be no sense in saying that any one nation had ever been more correct in its approval than any other, no sense in saying that the world could ever grow better or worse.

So you see that though the differences between people's ideas of Decent Behaviour often make you suspect that there is no real natural Law of Behaviour at all, yet the things we are bound to think about these differences really prove just the opposite. But one word before I end. I think that some listeners have been exaggerating the differences, because they have not distinguished between differences of morality and differences of belief about facts. For example, one listener wrote and said, "Three hundred years ago people in England were putting witches to death. Was that what you call the Rule of Human Nature or Right Conduct?" But surely the reason we don't execute witches is that we don't believe there are such things. If we did—if we really thought that there were people going about who had sold themselves to the devil and received supernatural powers from him in return and were using these powers to kill their neighbours or drive them mad or bring bad weather, surely we'd all agree that if anyone deserved the death penalty, then

these filthy quislings did There's no difference of moral principle here the difference is simply about matter of fact It may be a great advance in *knowledge* not to believe in witches there's no moral advance in not executing them when you don't think they are there! You wouldn't call a man humane for ceasing to set mouse-traps if he did so because he believed there were no mice in the house

### 3

I now go back to what I said at the end of the first talk, that there were two odd things about the human race First, that they were haunted by the idea of a sort of behaviour they ought to practise, what you might call fair play, or decency, or morality, or the Law of Nature Second, that they didn't in fact do so Now some of you may wonder why I called this odd It may seem to you the most natural thing in the world In particular, you may have thought I was rather hard on the human race After all, you may say, what I call breaking the Law of Right and Wrong or of Nature, only means that people aren't perfect And why on earth should I expect them to be? Well, that would be a good answer if what I was trying to do was to fix the exact amount of blame which is due to us for not behaving as we expect others to behave But that isn't my job at all I'm not concerned at present with blame, I'm trying to find out truth And from that point of view the very idea of something being imperfect, of its not being what it ought to be, has certain consequences

If you take a thing like a stone or a tree, it is what it is and there's no sense in saying it ought to have been otherwise Of course you may say a stone's "the wrong shape" if you want to use it for a rockery, or that a tree's a bad tree because it doesn't give you as much shade as you expected But all you mean is that the stone or the tree doesn't happen to be convenient for some purpose of your own You're not, except as a joke, blaming them for that You really know that, given the weather and the soil, the tree *couldn't* have been any different. What we, from our point of view, call a 'bad' tree is obeying the laws of its nature, just as much as a "good" one

Now have you noticed what follows? It follows that what we usually call the laws of nature—the way weather works on a tree, for example—may not really be *laws* in the strict sense, but only in a manner of speaking. When you say that falling stones always obey the law of gravitation, isn't this much the same as saying that the law only means "what stones always do"? You don't really think that when a stone is let go, it suddenly remembers that it is under orders to fall to the ground! You only mean that, in fact, it *does* fall. In other words, you can't be sure



that there is anything over and above the facts themselves, any law about what ought to happen, as distinct from what does happen. The laws of nature, as applied to stones or trees, may only mean "what Nature, in fact, does." But if you turn to the Law of Human Nature, the Law of Decent Behaviour, it's a different matter. That law certainly doesn't mean "what human beings, in fact, do", for as I said before, many of them don't obey this law at all, and none of them obey it completely. The law of gravity tells you what stones do if you drop them, but the Law of Human Nature tells you what human beings ought to do, and don't. In other words, when you're dealing with humans, something else comes in above and beyond the actual facts. You have the facts (how men do behave) and you also have something else (how they ought to behave). In the rest of the universe there needn't be anything but the facts. Electrons and molecules behave in a certain way, and certain results follow, and that *may* be the whole story. But men behave in a certain way and that's not the whole story, for all the time you know that they ought to behave differently.

Now this is really so peculiar that one is tempted to try to explain it away. For instance, we might try to make out that when you say a man oughtn't to act as he does, you only mean the same as when you say that a stone's the wrong shape, namely, that what he's doing happens to be inconvenient to you. But that just isn't true. A man occupying the corner seat in the train because he got there first, and a man who slipped into it while my back was turned and removed my bag, are both equally inconvenient. But I blame the second man and don't blame the first. I'm not angry—except perhaps for a moment before I came to my senses—with a man who trips me up by accident; I am angry with a man who tries to trip me up even if he doesn't succeed. Yet the first has hurt me and the second hasn't. Sometimes the behaviour which I call bad is not inconvenient to me at all, but the very opposite. In war, each side may find a traitor on the other side very useful. But though they use him and pay him they regard him as human vermin. So you can't say that what we call decent behaviour in others is simply the behaviour that happens to be useful to us. And as for decent behaviour in ourselves, I suppose it's pretty obvious that it doesn't mean the behaviour that pays. It means things like being content with thirty shillings when you might have got three pounds, leaving a girl alone when you'd like to make love to her, staying in dangerous places when you could go somewhere safer, keeping promises you'd rather not keep, and telling the truth even when it makes you look a fool.

Some people say that though decent conduct doesn't mean what pays each particular person at a particular moment, still, it means what pays the human race as a whole, and that consequently there's no mystery

about it. Human beings, after all, have some sense, they see that you can't have any real safety or happiness except in a society where every one plays fair, and it's because they see this that they try to behave decently. Now, of course, it's perfectly true that safety and happiness can only come from individuals, classes, and nations being honest and fair and kind to each other. It is one of the most important truths in the world. But as an explanation of why we feel as we do about Right and Wrong it just misses the point. If we ask, "Why ought I to be unselfish?" and you reply, 'Because it is good for society,' we may then ask, "Why should I care what's good for society except when it happens to pay *me* personally?" and then you'll have to say, "Because you ought to be unselfish"—which simply brings us back to where we started. You're saying what's true, but you're not getting any further. If a man asked what was the point of playing football, it wouldn't be much good saying, "in order to score goals," for trying to score goals is the game itself, not the reason for the game, and you'd really only be saying that football was football—which is true, but not worth saying. In the same way, if a man asks what is the point of behaving decently, it's no good replying, "in order to benefit society," for trying to benefit other people, in other words being unselfish is one of the things decent behaviour consists in, all you're really saying is that decent behaviour is decent behaviour. You'd have said just as much if you'd stopped at the statement, "Men ought to be unselfish."

And that's just where I do stop. Men ought to be unselfish, ought to be fair. Not that men are unselfish, nor that they like being unselfish, but that they ought to be. The Moral Law, or Law of Human Nature, is not simply a fact about human behaviour in the same way as the Law of Gravitation is, or may be, simply a fact about how heavy objects behave. On the other hand, it's not a mere fancy, for we can't get rid of the idea, and most of the things we say and think about men would be reduced to nonsense if we did. And it's not simply a statement about how we should like men to behave for our own convenience, for the behaviour we call bad or unfair isn't exactly the same as the behaviour we find inconvenient, and may even be the opposite. Consequently, this Rule of Right and Wrong, or Law of Human Nature, or whatever you call it, must somehow or other be a real thing—a thing that's really there, not made up by ourselves. And yet it's not a fact in the ordinary sense, in the same way as our actual behaviour is a fact. It begins to look as if we'll have to admit that there's more than one kind of reality, that, in this particular case, there's something above and beyond the ordinary facts of men's behaviour, and yet quite definitely real—a real law, which none of us made, but which we find pressing on us.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. Recapitulate Lewis's series of reasons for believing that there is a "Law of Nature"—that there is a "real Right and Wrong."
2. What are his reasons for believing that the moral law is not simply an instinct?
3. What are his reasons for believing that the moral law is not simply a social convention?
4. What is the essential difference between the moral law and the laws of the physical universe?
5. What is Lewis's conclusion about the source of the moral law?
6. Aside from direct reference to the fact, what evidence is there in the style of presentation, that this essay was originally part of a radio series? Does this style have any virtues for writers?
7. Upon what does the opening paragraph depend for its effectiveness?
8. By what means does Lewis make clear the distinction between natural and moral law? How does he make use of comparison between the two to develop his ideas?
9. Is the comparison between the operation of the moral law and playing the piano effective in clarifying Lewis's point? In what way?
10. Consider the same questions with reference to Lewis's use of the witch trials.
11. What specific means does Lewis use to give coherence to the essay?
12. Much of the development of this essay consists of reasoning about specific points. Upon what does the effectiveness of this method depend?

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. To what extent do you think people are motivated by the desire to benefit society in general?
2. Lewis says that different moralities are only slightly different. Give your evidence for agreeing or disagreeing.
3. Is it right or wrong to cheat on college examinations? In composing college papers, is it right or wrong to copy or paraphrase without acknowledgment portions taken from books?
4. What penalties do you think exist for failure to obey the moral law?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

1. Breaking traffic laws is (or is not) breaking the moral law.
2. A truly unselfish act.
3. The moral law does (or does not) apply to business dealings.
4. Good behavior depends on the situation.

### ABBA HILLEL SILVER

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## Prophetic Religion in World Culture

### I

The crisis of our age is far more spiritual than economic It is a crisis of ideas and beliefs Were it mainly economic, our enormous and vastly accelerated engine of material production, our advanced technological skill, our new sources of power, and our increased facilities for transportation and distribution would have solved it before now They are not solving it They are contributing more and more to conflict, breakdown and chaos The besetting fear of our age is not that of Malthus, that sufficient food may not be available for the world's expanding population Rather is it the fear that, while food and water and all the desirable things of life may be abundant and near at hand, the human race, like Tantalus, will, because of some fatal perversity of fate, never be permitted to enjoy them

Our age has passed beyond cynicism or sophistication It is distraught, and not because its high hopes for scientific progress have not been realized These have been realized far beyond the most extravagant hopes of man The first half of the twentieth century has been the most brilliantly creative period in scientific history In it, man has made his deepest soundings in the mysterious realms of matter and energy His inventive genius has achieved for him veritable miracles of power and riches But they have failed to give him what he had hoped for and what he needs preeminently—security, dignity, happiness He had come to believe that his scientific laboratories held for him the magic keys to all progress and well being, but in the darkening and threatening world in which he now finds himself, he cries unto his helpless idols, like the priests of Baal in the saga of Elijah, 'O Baal, answer us' But 'though they proceeded to slash one another according to their custom with swords and with lances until the blood gushed out upon them', there was no voice, nor answer "

Our age is suffering from what the *Bible* calls 'the drooping of the soul,' a dangerous deflation of morale, a spiritual malaise Its brilliant intellectual and scientific achievements only make phosphorescent the appalling stages of decomposition

Prophetic religion admonished men to place reverence for the moral law above all knowledge, and urged men to find therein their security, dignity, and happiness. Knowledge is important. It too, is of God. Knowledge expands and enriches life. It opens up new continents for the adventuring spirit of man. But 'the beginning of knowledge is reverence for God.'

In God, human life finds meaning. The mission of prophetic religion is to help men to find meaning in a universe where ultimate meaning is forever hidden from them. Professor Albert Einstein writes, 'What is the meaning of human life, or of organic life altogether? To answer this question at all implies a religion. Is there any sense then, you ask, in putting it? I answer, the man who regards his own life and that of his fellow creatures as meaningless is not merely unfortunate, but almost disqualified for life.'

There was a time when scientists were confident that they would soon work out the solution for the riddle of the universe. It was only a matter of time, they thought, only a matter of probing deeper and deeper, of adding one fact to another, one discovery to another, until the required total was reached, before men would know all that they wished to know.

In our generation, scientists are far less confident. The most crude among them today acknowledge that objective reality may forever elude the grasp of men. 'In the evolution of scientific thought, one fact has become impressively clear. There is no mystery of the physical world which does not point to a mystery beyond itself. All highroads of the intellect, all byways of theory and conjecture, lead ultimately to an abyss that human ingenuity can never span. For man is enchained by the very condition of his being, his finiteness and involvement in nature.

Man is his own greatest mystery.'

Although man has been denied the knowledge of ultimate reality—the how and why of things—he is nevertheless permitted to learn much, very much of the relations which exist between things in the universe and the forces in the universe. While he may never be able to explain, because he may never be able to understand the nature and origin of electricity or gravitation or magnetism, he may come to understand a great deal about their operation, and thus be enabled to use them to his advantage, to increase his power and his security in the world. It is in this field, which is unlimited, of profitable research and investigation into the relationships of things and forces, in learning how things operate and how we can use them, that man can find great reward and abundant satisfactions. Thus, even though scientific knowledge may never be ab-

Egyptian Pharaoh and his host, they were marshalling supreme religious truth and authority to underwrite their political revolution <sup>4</sup>

So also did the long and bitter struggle in our country to free the slaves receive its momentum and irresistible drive, not from science or economics or from any materialistic interpretation of history, but from a profound religious conviction which could not be permanently denied or suppressed, that the enslavement of human beings is contrary to the law of God

All men must be free because they are all important severally and intrinsically My life is important and so is my neighbor's Through co-operation our independent lives gain in effectiveness and security, but lose nothing in spiritual sovereignty The crux of the whole matter is reverence for human life itself The immortal mandate of Scripture, which is found in *Leviticus*, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," comes as climax and summation of a whole series of prescriptions and ordinances, all of them intended to stress reverence for human life and respect for the personality of every individual "Thou shalt not oppress thy neighbor thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor favor the person of the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor thou shalt not spread false reports among thy people thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart thou shalt not take vengeance nor be intolerant of thy fellowmen "

Our age, unfortunately, makes little of the individual His personal life is not very important. Men are handled impersonally in the mass Increasingly they are becoming statistics in the hands of a predatory collectivism They are shunted about like herds of cattle They are slaughtered in the millions They are coordinated and subjugated to the state until the last vestige of their freedom and their rights vanishes Because the religious basis of our society has been denied, and materialistic theories of life and history have taken hold of the thoughts and actions of men and governments, the stature of the individual, and, with it, his rights and inherent dignity have suffered tragic abatement and diminution in our day Every precinct of his life is invaded and violated Having denied to man the image of God, he has been given the mask of the robot The most endangered person in the world today is the man who thinks for himself The eagerly awaited "people's century" has unfortunately become the century of the secret police

Because man is regarded as unimportant and possessed of no inherent and inalienable rights, it has been possible in our day for usurping political parties and governments shamelessly to call for, and to achieve the ruthless expropriation and extermination of whole classes of people of whose political and economic views and interests they did not approve

Our age has witnessed the appalling mass slaughter of millions of men, women and children because of some insane race theories held by a totalitarian government. It has also been experiencing, recurrently, dangerous mass propaganda movements, steeped in hate, bigotry and intolerance, and aimed at depriving men of their dignity, equality and freedom. We have been swinging into an ever widening orbit of intolerance.

Our civilization today lacks compassion and mercy because man is condemned. He is seldom thought of as an end in himself, but as a tool for something or someone else—the state, the party, the system—to be used, abused, broken, and cast aside.

## 5

We are moving in dangerous times as mankind gropes for a solution of its grave economic problems and seeks to find the fair balance between social control and individual enterprise, between authority and freedom. Unfortunately, we are moving also with little love in our hearts, and with little respect and regard for man as such. We are spiritually unprepared for the enormous task. The psychology of war has already gripped and possessed us, and we are thinking far more of ways of preparing for war than of ways of finding the peace.

In his book, *War or Peace*, Mr. John Foster Dulles writes

We are engaged in an armament race. The race is very exciting and it is easy for the followers to be carried away by their excitement and lose their sense of proportion.

The peoples of the world have long looked on the United States as a peace loving nation. Because of that we have had good will everywhere and when war came, we were able to organize great alliances that marshaled most of the man power and resources of the world against those who were deemed to be militaristic. Our moral authority, in time, overcame initial military disadvantage. Let us not trade that moral birthright for a mess of pottage. As a result of excessive zeal to give the military whatever they professionally suggest, we have let it appear that we have gone militaristic. The Soviet Union, which has perhaps the greatest military force in the world, whose leaders preach the necessity of violence, appears as the advocate of peace.

It is imperative that our government should get good military advice. I have no doubt that we are getting it, for American officers are the most competent and most patriotic of any in the world. But that advice should be weighed by those who believe that war is not inevitable, that we can and must have peace, and that it may be necessary to take some chances for peace. Indeed, history suggests that only those who are willing to take some chances for peace have a good chance of winning total war.<sup>6</sup>

The road to peace is far more difficult to follow than the road to war. The road to war is a well trodden road which is often paved and smoothly

solute for man, it nevertheless offers him a world of enterprise, challenge and meaning to satisfy a purposeful and victorious life

This is true also of man's spiritual life. Man can never learn the nature of God. Man can never understand the ultimate purpose and plan of creation. The great religious thinkers were the first to point this out, and stressed it time and time again. Nevertheless, man has not been left in utter darkness concerning those matters which affect his moral destiny in this unknowable universe. Much has been made known to him through seers and prophets, and by his own experience. While he may never know the true nature of God or the ultimate purpose of creation, he may learn much about the operations of God's laws of justice, love, truth and selflessness in the world of men, and living by these laws, he may prosper.

Within a hard, unyielding framework of the unknown and the unknowable, there is a vast world of ascertainable moral truth and of opportunities for moral and spiritual growth and fulfillment, wherein man can find a sustaining purpose in life and a challenge to his noblest ambitions.

Our age has refused to find the meaning of its life in the pursuit of those moral objectives. It has also turned its back on other great teachings of prophetic religion.

### 3

In one of his recently published *Unpopular Essays*, Bertrand Russell writes 'The importance of Man, which is the one indispensable dogma of the theologians, receives no support from a scientific view of the future of the solar system.'<sup>3</sup> To which one is prompted to reply, so much the worse for the scientific view, which doubtless will go through many revisions and corrections in the future, as have so many other scientific views in the past. Time and again, science has been tardy in arriving at conclusions which the intuitive religious genius of mankind postulated long ago. Furthermore, there are religious convictions which require no confirmation at the hands of science, and which science can never affirm or deny.

But Bertrand Russell is entirely correct when he states that 'the importance of Man is the one indispensable dogma of the theologians.' It is also the one indispensable dogma of democracy, and it is at the heart of the terrible crisis which is cleaving and rending our world today.

Both Judaism and Christianity hold that man has immense significance in the scheme of things. Man is very important to God in the unfoldment of His purposes—each man, every man, rich or poor, simple or wise, black or white, saint or sinner. Sin is a voluntary lapse into unworthiness and unimportance. It is descent into paltriness. Man should live and act



as if his life were tremendously significant, as if he were a co-worker of God in creation, as if his soul and mind were boundless in their capacities, and, in their influence, reaching distant shores and extending far into the future

One of the sages of Israel, long ago, employing the rich imaginative style which so often characterized their utterances, declared "When a man goes forth on his way, a troop of angels precede him and proclaim 'Make way for the image of God, blessed be He'"

The universal moral law which religion proclaims, demands much of man in terms of duty and sacrifice, but it gives much to him in terms of high and independent status, dignity and inalienable rights "Every man has the right to say," declared an inspired teacher of Israel, "for my sake was the world created" A sense of kinship with God "crowned man with glory and honor" and made him feel "a little lower than the angels"

Similarly, the far-visioned poet of American democracy, Walt Whitman, proclaimed, "The whole theory of the universe is directed unerringly to one single individual—namely, to you" This is the heroic dogma of American democracy which derived its sanction from religion Religion always addressed itself directly to the individual "Thou shalt! Thou shalt not! I am the Lord, thy God!" It has always held inviolate for man, a relationship with God which transcended all his relationships with society

#### 4

Friends of democracy seem to have forgotten the religious origin of the democratic revolution in the Western world Modern democracy was born out of the struggle for religious freedom in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Out of that victorious struggle there stemmed other victories for man political, economic and social freedom Thus when, in the eighteenth century, the founding fathers of our Republic wrote into the Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life liberty and the pursuit of happiness," they were giving political expression to what was fundamentally religious doctrine When they proclaimed that resistance to tyrants is obedience to God, when they engraved upon the Liberty Bell the Biblical verse "Ye shall proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof," or when Franklin and Jefferson, in drafting the first seal of the United States, engraved on it the figure of Moses, the immortal emancipator, as he stood on the shore of the Red Sea and caused its water to overwhelm the

surfaced by national pride and emotionalism, by grandiose conceptions of national superiority and destiny. The road to peace is the hard road to restraint and self possession, of caution and forbearance, of faith and humility. This is the road which religion has always marked out for the progress of mankind.

## 6

Even as our age rejected the classic religious doctrine of meaning in terms of moral aspiration, and ends in terms of integrity of the individual, it has also rejected its teachings concerning the method of human progress and the nature of human life.

Our thinking in the last one hundred years on the subject of organic and social evolution has been based on the doctrine of natural selection and the survival of the fittest. Competition was the key to life, and survival was achieved by combat, nature was "red in tooth and claw."

Social philosophies incorporated these biologic views into their systems and found in them justification for competition and conflict between men and nations. These scientific notions were also marshaled to rationalize war, and to justify the ruthless economic exploitation of men in industry and of backward colonial peoples, as well as the institution of slavery.

Belatedly, science has begun to rectify those views and to approximate in its recent findings the great religious doctrines that cooperation rather than competition is the law of human survival, that the problem of human life is not fundamentally one of economics but of inter personal relationships. Even in the animal world it has been discovered that "cooperative behavior is at least as prominent a form of interaction as competition." Animals living in association have greater protection, security, and a greater survival potential.

In his stimulating book, *On Being Human*, Professor Ashley Montagu writes

If we would seek for one word which describes society better than any other, that word is cooperation. The important point to grasp is that, contrary to the beliefs of the struggle for survival school of thought, man does not have to create a cooperative mood for himself to erect over the tufa of his savage strivings to be otherwise. Not at all. The impulses toward cooperative behavior are already present in him at birth, and all they require is cultivation. There is not a shred of evidence that man is born with 'hostile' or 'evil' impulses which must be watched and disciplined. Discipline of basic impulses is, indeed, necessary, but it is the discipline of love, *not* of frustration, which they require.<sup>6</sup>

And he concludes his study with the following observation:

Cooperative behavior clearly has great survival value. When social behavior is not cooperative, it is diseased. The dominant principle which informs all

behavior that is biologically healthy is love Without love there can be no healthy social behavior, cooperation, or security To love thy neighbor as thyself is not simply good text material for Sunday morning sermons but perfectly sound biology

Men who do not love one another are sick—sick not from any disease arising within themselves but from a disease which has been enculturated within them by the false values of their societies Belief in false values which condition the development of the person, in competition instead of cooperation, in narrow selfish interests instead of altruism, in atomism instead of universalism, in the value of money instead of the value of man represents man turning upon all that is innately good in him Man's sense of mutuality and cooperativeness may be suppressed but so long as man continues to exist, it cannot be destroyed, for these are traits which are part of his protoplasm His combativeness and competitiveness arise primarily from the frustration of his need to cooperate These are important facts to bear in mind at a time when all the surface evidence seems to point to a contrary direction The word of the moment may be fission—whether with respect to physics or human affairs—but fusion comes much closer to reflecting man's natural behavior patterns 7

All this, of course, is old fashioned religious doctrine which our age has brushed aside as unscientific Having done so, it has deprived itself of the spiritual weapons with which to confront the advocates of class struggle—of fascism, nazism, communism, and racism—who advanced “red in tooth and claw” to dominate the earth!

## 7

Our age has also rejected, and quite consistently with its general attitude of mind, the methodology of prophetic religion

One of the essential contributions of prophetic religion to human progress has been the concept of method There is not only God and the Good Life, there is also the way—the good way—which alone leads from one to the other

Prophetic religion defined a method by which men might attain morally desirable ends, a method worthy of the ends It outlawed the notion that moral ends justify immoral means Each single step on the way toward the realization of a worthy objective must be a worthy objective in itself Means have a way of inserting and of integrating themselves into ends, and of determining their ultimate pattern Therefore, to establish justice or freedom or peace, men must employ the ways of justice, freedom, and peace

The more exalted human goals become, the less likelihood there is of their early or complete attainment Accordingly, when ruthless, brutal and desperate measures are employed, they not only make the attainment of these goals impossible, they also turn man's long journey toward

them into one of unmitigated misery and horror. There is no justice without love: on the basis of justice alone the world cannot endure.

The method which prophetic religion proposed for human progress was not that of gradualism, or the "golden mean," in terms of some mathematical middle ground between the extremes of good and evil. That which is evil must be eradicated. To temporize or compromise with evil is self-defeating. But if man should be impatient with wrong doing, and quick and resolute to correct it, he should also be patient in faith when his efforts are frustrated. When the moral reformation of a society from within is too slow, the denied and dispossessed masses of the earth rise in a desperation which boils up into violence. It is then that they unloose the whirlwind of rebellion and "reply to God after the silence of the centuries." Religion urges the moral transformation of society by revolution, not through violence, terror, and purges, but by love, compassion, and reconciliation—the revolution within, the inner repentance.

Prophetic religion asked of man a quick and decisive moral transformation. It did not ask the impossible of man. It did not set goals which are forever beyond his reach. "This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, neither is it beyond the sea, but the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." It did not reject this world as one wherein man could not fulfill himself. It did not deny man his normal enjoyments or summon him to self-mortification and asceticism. It did not call for resignation and quietism. It did not proclaim that private property and private enterprise are evil in themselves, nor that wealth is a vice, and poverty a virtue. It did not regard any human institution, sacred or secular, as infallible, nor any economic system as flawless or adequate insurance against the abuse of power, the exploitation of man, and the defeat of the spiritual promises of human life. It warned of the moral pitfalls hidden in every form of excess, even in the excess of virtue, and in every political and economic system. It admonished men not to make the works of their hands, their God.

The method which prophetic religion was careful to define, called for acceptance of a supreme moral law of justice tempered by love, binding at all times upon all men individually and collectively. The good way, called for a curbing of all unlimited power, and a rejection of all irresponsible authority. No man and no government is above the moral law.

The classic way of religion has never been fully tried in the world. Today it is being ignored more thoroughly than at any time in human history. State and class autocracies have proclaimed that there is no law superior to theirs, and that their ruthless coercive methods are justified by their results. They are impeccable and unimpeachable be-

cause, forsooth, they recognize no laws other than their own by which they can be judged.

The Middle Ages were said to be theocentric. The modern age has been anthropocentric. The age following the great world wars has become Caesarocentric. The first has been called an age of faith, the second, an age of reason. Ours is fast becoming an age wherein both faith and reason are being sacrificed to the bloody Moloch of the all-consuming state.

The economic life of man has resolved itself into a bitter class struggle. Each class is resorting without hesitancy or compunction to methods of violence, suppression and civil war. Each class justifies its tactics in the name of some great human ideal. The shame of our age is that men are committing the most shameless acts of immorality in the name of high morality. Methods which are abhorred and denounced in one's opponents are rationalized and justified as moral imperatives when employed by oneself. Men talk of justice and brotherhood, of a classless society and universal peace, but they act as if these ideals were demons out of hell, lashing them on furiously to the most brutal acts of injustice, hatred, and violence.

## 8

For civilization to survive, it is clearly necessary to revise the mood and thought pattern of our age, and to recharge our world culture with new meaning and content. In this task we may count upon science as our ally today. Released from the pseudo-scientific incantations of the past, and from false social philosophies based upon them, education, braced and fortified afresh by the moral axioms of prophetic religion, should now proceed more purposefully than ever before, and more energetically—for it is later than we think—upon its appointed mission to help men discover the best in their minds and hearts, and to direct them to eager cooperative living in a free society.

This education should not be a part time or released time instruction, relegated to the church or the Sunday school, as a sort of grudging concession to a patriarchal convention, or to a culture run to seed. It should permeate and electrify every subject that is taught, especially the social sciences, every educative institution, every area of social activity for young or old, every agency which molds public opinion. The stone which the builders rejected should now become the chief cornerstone. It is not only a defeated Germany which needs re-education, but all the victorious peoples as well. What our age needs, and what the newer education should offer it, is not a corpus of canonized doctrines to be accepted under authority, a new dogmatism as a counterfoil to the monolithic orthodoxy of modern dictatorships, but a new mood and point of view,

a new covenant with character, a new and confident devotion to the enduring social ideals of mankind, and to the only valid and unvitiated technique for attaining them 'Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die, O house of Israel turn yourselves, and live!'

## 9

Prophetic religion was the supreme champion of social idealism, of justice, of freedom, of peace. It was the thorn in the flesh of privilege, the goad, the troubler. Its task was 'to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.' Its mission was not to give man peace of mind. The *Bible* nowhere calls upon men to go out in search of peace of mind. It does call upon men to go out in search of God and the things of God. It calls upon men to hunger and thirst after righteousness, to seek justice and pursue it, to relieve the oppressed, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to establish peace in the world. Such enterprises are seldom attended by ease and tranquillity. Rather are they attended by persecution and suffering. If prophetic religion could not offer the faithful the compensations of peace of mind, it did offer them other compensations—an uplifting and sustaining interest in life, a nourishing pride and wonderment, and, on rare occasions, unbelievable ecstasy. There is a singing vibrancy to lyrical moments of daring and aspiring. At such moments men partake of the wine of life and eat of the bread of heaven.

Unfortunately, ecclesiasticism and institutionalism banked the fires of prophetic religion. As a result, leadership in the building of the good society was frequently seized by other hands, which as often as not, plunged mankind into greater misery than before, for though the hands of the godless may build a well run and efficient prison house, they can never build the good society. Religion was not only tardy in championing human rights, at times it was actually retarding and reactionary. It is still too slow paced and worldly minded. It must again seize the initiative for mankind's salvation. It must become apostolic, and courageously lead a worldwide pacific revolution to eliminate poverty, to stamp out illiteracy, to end economic exploitation and race discrimination, to improve the health of the masses of the earth, and to stimulate the maximum exploitation of all resources, human and physical, for the sake of man as such. It will then recapture the loyalty of men for the faith which it proclaims, and it will rekindle among them confidence in the efficacy of the peaceful methods of human progress in place of the revolutionary violence and dictatorship which materialistic communism proclaims.

Belatedly, though fortunately not too late, the authentic, self-critical democracies of the world are coming to realize that the ultimate defense of democracy in the world lies, not in superior armor or in the atomic

bomb, but in raising the standard of living of the masses of the earth whose misery and wrongs are receptive soil for doctrines of violent revolution, and for all types of messianic deceptions. In a climate of unrelieved despair and resentment, both fascist and communist dictatorships, as well as other forms of social aberrations, find their opportunity. The deception of these totalitarian salvationists is transparent. It is not the state, but the individual, his freedom and his personality which, in their system, diminishes and "withers away." The evils of privilege and tyranny which they propose to eradicate soon reappear under another guise and another gloss.

## IO

Politically, the nations of the world have organized for collective action to insure peace. The United Nations is the second attempt at such organization. Its achievements so far have not been as notable as had been hoped. Even if we should be unable to prevent a third world war, the United Nations would not necessarily come to an end. Certain of its important functions in the economic, social and humanitarian areas would doubtless go on without a break, even as certain functions of the League of Nations were continued through World War II. Moreover, United Nations security functions, even if halted for a time, would be revised for there is no substitute for collective action if the world is to have peace. The religious faiths of the world, however, have not yet organized for collective action. This is the more exceptionable, inasmuch as all the great religions of mankind have heralded and stressed their universalism and their international character. In this failure lies a partial explanation of the ineffectiveness of the religious forces on the world scene today. A world organization of religions—not only their clerical leaders but their lay leaders as well—can buttress and reinforce the United Nations. It can rally the religious spirit and loyalties of mankind to its support and liberate a great fund of genuine peace sentiment. It can create the proper climate, the favorable emotional atmosphere and temper for the deliberations of that body, which today finds itself almost stifled in the miasma of turbid, irritative recriminations and vituperative competitiveness. The attempt to achieve the political organization of mankind solely on the basis of national self-interests and calculated immunity from war is evidently not succeeding. The United Nations is not self-sustaining. It needs the continuous replenishment of an up-welling faith. Sustained and purposeful social activity and international movements for the advancement of mankind must be centered in a belief and must draw their sustenance from it.

Is it not clear that all men of goodwill today must unite their forces in urgent defense of their common, spiritual heritage which is being threat-

ened both at home and abroad? They must never accept the idea of inevitable and irrepressible conflict between classes or nations or economic systems. The warm spirit of man is always better than the cold war. It is not to the best interest of mankind that men of goodwill should work today for the hardening of the disastrous divisions of our world which already exist. It is not to the best interests of mankind that men of goodwill should become violent and indiscriminate partisans of one economic system as against another, to the point of proclaiming their total irreconcilability, and their inability ever to co-exist in the same world. These were the bitter and provocative slogans of the bloody religious wars which ravaged mankind for so many centuries, and of all the racial wars of mankind. All these wars, after exacting their frightful toll in human life and misery, ended not in victory but in the compromise of mutual toleration.

Jews and Christians and men of all other faiths have work to do in the world, not merely as citizens of their countries, but as adherents of historic and prophetic faiths whose mission it has always been to teach men to rise above the levels and limitations of system, class, nation, or race to the high levels of humanity, to an eager and outreaching cooperativeness in the building of the good society on earth, where man's high hopes for justice, freedom and peace can find at last their happy anchorage.

The Talmud records a legend. During each of the four "turnings of the sun"—the vernal equinox, the summer solstice, the autumnal equinox and the winter solstice—a different angel is appointed over the world. But for a moment when the change of the angels takes place, the world remains without a leader. It is at this moment that Scorpio throws gall and a drop of blood into the water to cause death to mankind.<sup>8</sup>

Our age is at one of these "turnings of the sun," and our world is without a leader. Scorpio is at the moment throwing gall and blood into the stream of life to cause the death of mankind. What angel will be appointed to guide the destiny of our world tomorrow? Will prophetic religion be that guardian angel?

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### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What is Rabbi Silver's view of the nature of the crisis facing our age?
- 2 What is prophetic religion? In what way is it comparable to science?
3. What is the attitude of religion toward man, and what part has this attitude played in the spread of democracy?
- 4 In what way is science moving closer to religious ideas about human progress?
- 5 By what method does religion propose that human progress be achieved?
- 6 Why has prophetic religion not been effective in the world today? How may it become so?
7. What in this essay indicates that Silver is highly conscious of his readers and of the necessity to make his ideas clear and impressive to them?
- 8 Has this essay been organized according to any discernible plan? If so, what is it?
- 9 Do you find Silver's references to, and quotations from, other writers desirable? Why or why not?
- 10 What principal point is Silver making in Section 3? What part does each paragraph play in the presentation of the principal point of the section?
- 11 Discuss the function and the effectiveness of the last two paragraphs of the essay

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 How can men be induced to turn from competition to cooperation?
- 2 In your estimation, does competition have any value for mankind? If so, to what extent should it be encouraged?
- 3 Discuss ways in which the U N could be made a more effective instrument of human progress.
- 4 How exactly can the term *religion* be defined? Does religion require a definite creed or statement of belief?
- 5 Is religion always beneficent in its result? Explain.
- 6 What role do you think religion should play in education?

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 An example of effective cooperation
- 2 My personal religion.

- 3 The U N as a force for peace
- 4 Religion should (or should not) permeate all human activity.
- 5 Religion on our campus

## GILBERT K. CHESTERTON

(1879 1936), well known English writer in many forms including the essay novel biography play and poetry was a Roman Catholic who often wrote from a religious point of view Among his best known works are his detective stories dealing with Father Brown His other books include *The Man Who Was Thursday*, *Heretics*, and his *Autobiography* [Reprinted by kind permission of Miss Dorothy E Collins and the publishers from *The Well and the Shallows* Copyright 1935 by Sheed & Ward]

### *The Return to Religion*

In the days when Huxley and Herbert Spencer and the Victorian agnostics were trumpeting as a final truth the famous hypothesis of Darwin, it seemed to thousands of simple people almost impossible that Christianity should survive It is all the more ironic that it has not only survived them all, but it is a perfect example, perhaps the only real example, of what they called the Survival of the Fittest

It so happens that it does really and truly fit in with the theory offered by Darwin, which was something totally different from most of the theories accepted by Darwinians This real original theory of Darwin has since very largely broken down in the general field of biology and botany, but it does actually apply to this particular argument in the field of religious history The recent reemergence of our religion is a survival of the fittest as Darwin meant it, and not as popular Darwinism meant it, so far as it meant anything Among the innumerable muddles, which mere materialistic fashion made out of the famous theory, there was in many quarters a queer idea that the Struggle for Existence was of necessity an actual struggle between the candidates for survival, literally a cut throat competition There was a vague idea that the strongest creature violently triumphed over and trampled on the others And the notion that this was the one method of improvement came everywhere as good news to bad men, to bad rulers, to bad employers, to swindlers and sweaters and the rest The brisk owner of a bucket shop compared himself modestly to a mammoth, trampling down other mammoths in the primeval jungle The businessman destroyed other businessmen, under the extraordinary delusion that the eolippic horse had devoured other

cohippic horses The rich man suddenly discovered that it was not only convenient but cosmic to starve or pillage the poor, because pterodactyls may have used their little hands to tear each other's eyes Science, that nameless being declared that the weakest must go to the wall, especially in Wall Street There was a rapid decline and degradation in the sense of responsibility in the rich, from the merely rationalistic eighteenth century to the purely scientific nineteenth The great Jefferson, when he reluctantly legalized slavery, said he trembled for his country, knowing that God is just The profiteer of later times, when he legalized usury or financial trickery, was satisfied with himself, knowing that Nature is unjust

But, however that may be (and of course the moral malady has survived the scientific mistake), the people who talked thus of cannibal horses and competitive oysters, did not understand what Darwin's thesis was If later biologists have condemned it, it should not be condemned without being understood, widely as it has been accepted without being understood The point of Darwinism was not that a bird with a longer beak (let us say) thrust it into other birds, and had the advantage of a duelist with a longer sword The point of Darwinism was that the bird with the longer beak could reach worms (let us say) at the bottom of a deeper hole, that the birds who could not do so would die, and he alone would remain to found a race of long beaked birds Darwinism suggested that if this happened a vast number of times, in a vast series of ages, it might account for the difference between the beaks of a sparrow and a stork But the point was that the fittest did not need to *struggle* against the unfit The survivor had nothing to do except to survive when the others could not survive He survived because he alone had the features and organs necessary for survival And, whatever be the truth about mammoths or monkeys, that is the exact truth about the present survival of Christianity It is surviving because nothing else can survive

Religion has returned, because all the various forms of scepticism that tried to take its place, and do its work, have by this time tied themselves into such knots that they cannot do anything That chain of causation of which they were fond of talking (a chain which the first physicist of the age has just burst into bits of scrap iron) seems really to have served them after the fashion of the proverbial rope, and when modern discussion gave them rope enough, they quite rapidly hanged themselves For there is not a single one of the fashionable forms of scientific scepticism, or determinism, that does not end in stark paralysis, touching the practical conduct of human life Take any three of the normal and necessary ideas on which civilisation and even society depend First, let us say, a scientific man of the old normal nineteenth-century sort would remark, 'We can at least have common sense, in its proper meaning of a sense

- 3 The U N as a force for peace
- 4 Religion should (or should not) permeate all human activity.
- 5 Religion on our campus

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In the days when Huxley and Herbert Spencer and the Victorian agnostics were trumpeting as a final truth the famous hypothesis of Darwin, it seemed to thousands of simple people almost impossible that Christianity should survive It is all the more ironic that it has not only survived them all, but it is a perfect example, perhaps the only real example, of what they called the Survival of the Fittest

It so happens that it does really and truly fit in with the theory offered by Darwin, which was something totally different from most of the theories accepted by Darwinians This real original theory of Darwin has since very largely broken down in the general field of biology and botany, but it does actually apply to this particular argument in the field of religious history The recent reemergence of our religion is a survival of the fittest as Darwin meant it, and not as popular Darwinism meant it, so far as it meant anything Among the innumerable muddles, which mere materialistic fashion made out of the famous theory, there was in many quarters a queer idea that the Struggle for Existence was of necessity an actual struggle between the candidates for survival, literally a cut throat competition There was a vague idea that the strongest creature violently triumphed over and trampled on the others And the notion that this was the one method of improvement came everywhere as good news to bad men, to bad rulers, to bad employers, to swindlers and sweaters and the rest The brisk owner of a bucket shop compared himself modestly to a mammoth, trampling down other mammoths in the primeval jungle The businessman destroyed other businessmen, under the extraordinary delusion that the cohippic horse had devoured other

eolhippic horses. The rich man suddenly discovered that it was not only convenient but cosmic to starve or pillage the poor, because pterodactyls may have used their little hands to tear each other's eyes. Science, that nameless being, declared that the weakest must go to the wall, especially in Wall Street. There was a rapid decline and degradation in the sense of responsibility in the rich, from the merely rationalistic eighteenth century to the purely scientific nineteenth. The great Jefferson, when he reluctantly legalized slavery, said he trembled for his country, knowing that God is just. The profiteer of later times, when he legalized usury or financial trickery, was satisfied with himself, knowing that Nature is unjust.

But, however that may be (and of course the moral malady has survived the scientific mistake), the people who talked thus of cannibal horses and competitive oysters, did not understand what Darwin's thesis was. If later biologists have condemned it, it should not be condemned without being understood, widely as it has been accepted without being understood. The point of Darwinism was not that a bird with a longer beak (let us say) thrust it into other birds, and had the advantage of a duelist with a longer sword. The point of Darwinism was that the bird with the longer beak could reach worms (let us say) at the bottom of a deeper hole, that the birds who could not do so would die, and he alone would remain to found a race of long beaked birds. Darwinism suggested that if this happened a vast number of times, in a vast series of ages, it might account for the difference between the beaks of a sparrow and a stork. But the point was that the fittest did not need to struggle against the unfit. The survivor had nothing to do except to survive when the others could not survive. He survived because he alone had the features and organs necessary for survival. And, whatever be the truth about mammoths or monkeys, that is the exact truth about the present survival of Christianity. It is surviving because nothing else can survive.

Religion has returned, because all the various forms of scepticism that tried to take its place, and do its work, have by this time tied themselves into such knots that they cannot do anything. That chain of causation of which they were fond of talking (a chain which the first physicist of the age has just burst into bits of scrap iron) seems really to have served them after the fashion of the proverbial rope, and when modern discussion gave them rope enough, they quite rapidly hanged themselves. For there is not a single one of the fashionable forms of scientific scepticism, or determinism, that does not end in stark paralysis, touching the practical conduct of human life. Take any three of the normal and necessary ideas on which civilisation and even society depend. First, let us say, a scientific man of the old normal nineteenth-century sort would remark, 'We can at least have common sense, in its proper meaning of a sense

of reality common to all, we can have common morals, for without them we cannot even have a community, a man must in the ordinary sense obey the law, and especially the moral law." But the newer sceptic, who is progressive and has gone further and fared worse, will immediately say, 'Why should you worship the taboo of your particular tribe? Why should you accept prejudices that are the product of a blind herd instinct? Why is there any authority in the unanimity of a flock of frightened sheep?' Suppose the normal man falls back on the deeper argument "I am not terrorised by the tribe, I do keep my independent judgment, I have a conscience and a light of justice within which judges the world." And the stronger sceptic will answer 'If the light in your body be darkness—and it is darkness because it is only in your body, what are your judgments but the incurable twist and bias of your particular heredity and accidental environment? What can we know about judgments, except that they must all be equally unjust? For they are all equally conditioned by defects and individual ignorances, all of them different and none of them distinguishable, for there exists no single man so sane and separate as to be able to distinguish them justly. Why should your conscience be any more reliable than your rotting teeth or your quite special defect of eyesight? God bless us all, one would think you believed in God!' Then perhaps the normal person will get annoyed and say rather snappishly 'At least, suppose we are men of science, there is science to appeal to and she will always answer, the evidential and experimental discovery of real things.' And the other sceptic will answer, if he has any sense of humour 'Why, certainly Sir Arthur Eddington is Science, and he will tell you that man really has free will and ought to hang on to religion for his life. Sir Bertram Windle was Science, and he would tell you that the scientific mind is completely satisfied in the Roman Catholic Church. For that matter, Sir Oliver Lodge is Science, and he has reached by purely experimental and evidential methods to a solid belief in ghosts. But I admit that there are men of science who cannot get to a solid belief in anything, even in science, even in themselves. There is the crystallographer of Cambridge who writes in the *Spectator* the lucid sentence 'We know that most of what we know is probably untrue.' Does that help you on a bit, in founding your sane and solid society?"

It is the perishing of the other things, at least as much as the persistence of one thing, that has left us at last face to face with the ancient religion of our fathers. The thing once called free thought has come finally to threaten everything that is free. It denies personal freedom in denying free will and the human power of choice. It threatens civic freedom with a plague of hygienic and psychological quackeries, spreading over the land such a network of pseudo-scientific nonsense as free citi

zens have never yet endured in history It is quite likely to reverse religious freedom, in the name of some barbarous nostrum or other, such as constitutes the crude and ill cultured creed of Russia It is perfectly capable of imposing silence and impotence from without But there is no doubt whatever that it imposes silence and impotence from within The whole trend of it, which began as a drive and has ended in a drift, is towards some form of the theory that a man cannot help himself, that a man cannot mend himself, above all, that a man cannot free himself In all its novels and most of its newspaper articles it takes for granted that men are stamped and fixed in certain types of abnormality or anarchical weakness, that they are pinned and labelled in a museum of morality or immorality, or of that sort of unmorality which is more priggish than the one and more hoggish than the other We are practically told that we might as well ask a fossil to reform itself We are told that we are asking a stuffed bird to repent We are all dead, and the only comfort is that we are all classified For by this philosophy, which is the same as that of the blackest of Puritan heresies, we all died before we were born But as it is Kismet without Allah, so also it is Calvinism without God

The agnostics will be gratified to learn that it is entirely due to their own energy and enterprise, to their own activity in pursuing their own antics, that the world has at last tired of their antics and told them so We have done very little against them, *non nobis, Domine* the glory of their final overthrow is all their own We have done far less than we should have done to explain all that balance of subtlety and sanity which is meant by a Christian civilization Our thanks are due to those who have so generously helped us, by giving a glumpe of what might be meant by a Pagan civilization And what is lost in that society is not so much religion as reason, the ordinary common daylight of intellectual instinct that has guided the children of men A world in which men know that most of what they know is probably untrue cannot be dignified with the name of a sceptical world, it is simply an impotent and abject world, not attacking anything, but accepting everything while trusting nothing, accepting even its own incapacity to attack, accepting its own lack of authority to accept, doubting its very right to doubt We are grateful for this public experiment and demonstration, it has taught us much We did not believe that rationalists were so utterly mad until they made it quite clear to us We did not ourselves think that the mere denial of our dogmas could end in such dehumanised and demented anarchy It might have taken the world a long time to understand that what it had been taught to dismiss as mediæval theology was often mere common sense, although the very term common sense or *communis sententia* was a mediæval conception But it took the world very little time to understand that the talk on the other side was most uncommon nonsense It

was nonsense that could not be made the basis of any common system, such as has been founded upon common sense

To take one example out of many the whole question of Marriage has been turned into a question of Mood. The enemies of marriage did not have the patience to remain in their relatively strong position, that marriage could not be proved to be sacramental, and that some exceptions must be treated as exceptions, so long as it was merely social. They could not be content to say that it is not a sacrament but a contract, and that exceptional legal action might break a contract. They brought objections against it that would be quite as facile and quite as futile if brought against any other contract. They said that a man is never in the same mood for ten minutes together, that he must not be asked to admire in a red daybreak what he admired in a yellow sunset, that no man can say he will even be the same man by the next month or the next minute, that new and nameless tortures may afflict him if his wife wears a different hat, or that he may plunge her into hell by putting on a pair of socks that does not harmonise with somebody else's carpet. It is quite obvious that this sort of sensitive insanity applies as much to any other human relation as to this relation. A man cannot choose a profession because, long before he has qualified as an architect, he may have mystically changed into an aviator, or been convulsed in rapid suggestions by the emotions of a ticket-collector, a trombone player, and a professional harpooner of whales. A man dare not buy a house, for fear a fatal stranger with the wrong sort of socks should come into it, or for fear his own mind should be utterly changed in the matter of carpets or cornices. A man may suddenly decline to do any business with his own business partner, because he also, like the cruel husband, wears the wrong necktie. And I saw a serious printed appeal for sympathy for a wife who deserted her family because her psychology was incompatible with orange neckties. This is only one application, as I say, but it exactly illustrates how the sceptical principle is now applied, and how scepticism has recently changed from apparent sense to quite self-evident nonsense. The heresies not only decay but destroy themselves—in any case they perish without a blow.

For the reply, not merely of religion but of reason and the rooted sanity of mankind, is obvious enough. "If you feel like that, why certainly you will not found families, or found anything else. You will not build houses, you will not make partnerships, you will not in any fashion do the business of the world. You will never plant a tree lest you wish next week you had planted it somewhere else, you will never put a potato into a pot of stew, because it will be too late to take it out again, your whole mood is stricken and riddled with cowardice and sterility, your whole way of attacking any problem is to think of excuses for not at-



tacking it at all. Very well, so be it, the Lord be with you. You may be respected for being sincere, you may be pitied for being sensitive, you may retain some of the corrective qualities which make it useful on occasion to be sceptical. But if you are too sceptical to do these things, you must stand out of the way of those who can do them, you must hand over the world to those who believe that the world is workable, to those who believe that men can make houses, make partnerships, make appointments, make promises—and keep them. And, if it is necessary to believe in God making Man, in God being made Man, or in God made Man coming in the clouds in glory, in order to keep a promise or boil a potato or behave like a human being—well, then you must at least give a chance to these credulous fanatics, who can believe the one and who can do the other." That is what I mean by the spiritual Survival of the Fittest. That is why the old phrase, which is probably a mistake in natural history, is a truth in supernatural history. The organic thing called religion has, in fact, the organs that take hold on life. It can feed where the fastidious doubter finds no food, it can reproduce where the solitary sceptic boasts of being barren. It may be accepting miracles to believe in free will, but it is accepting madness, sooner or later, to disbelieve in it. It may be a wild risk to make a vow, but it is a quiet, crawling, and inevitable ruin to refuse to make a vow. It may be incredible that one creed is the truth and the others are relatively false, but it is not only incredible, but also intolerable, that there is no truth either in or out of creeds, and all are equally false. For nobody can ever set anything right if everybody is equally wrong. The intense interest of the moment is that the Man of Science, the hero of the modern world and the latest of the great servants of humanity, has suddenly and dramatically refused to have anything more to do with this dreary business of nibbling negation, and blind scratching and scraping away of the very foundations of the mastery of man. For the work of the sceptic for the past hundred years has indeed been very like the fruitless fury of some primeval monster, eyeless, mindless, merely destructive and devouring, a giant worm wasting away a world that he could not even see, a benighted and bestial life, unconscious of its own cause and of its own consequences. But Man has taken to himself again his own weapons—will, and worship, and reason, and the vision of the plan in things—and we are once more in the morning of the world.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 What distinction does Chesterton make between real Darwinism and the popular conception of Darwinism?
- 2 In what sense, according to Chesterton, is Christianity an example of the Survival of the Fittest?

- 3 What are the three "normal and necessary ideas on which civilization and even society depend"? Why does Chesterton cite them and the sceptical attitude toward them?
- 4 How have the "agnostics" contributed to the re emergence of religion?
- 5 Explain what Chesterton means by the statement "the whole question of Marriage has been turned into a question of Mood." How does his discussion of marriage relate to his principal idea?
- 6 What is the great virtue of religion as contrasted with scepticism?
- 7 Consider such phrases as the following:
  - "the weakest must go to the wall, especially in Wall Street." (paragraph 2)
  - "The thing called free thought has come finally to threaten every thing that is free" (paragraph 5)
  - "It may be accepting miracles to believe in free will, but it is accepting madness, sooner or later, to disbelieve in it." (paragraph 8)
 Are they effective? Why? Find similar examples of this kind of writing in this essay
- 8 Chesterton often uses comparisons stated or implied to give force to his style "competitive oysters," "a giant worm wasting away a world that he could not even see" Find other examples and comment on their effectiveness
- 9 How widely does Chesterton make use of specific material as contrasted with general material in his essay? Cite instances of the use of both.
- 10 Comment on Chesterton's paragraph construction. What is characteristic of it? Is this a desirable characteristic?
- 11 Indicate the specific places in which Chesterton states his principal idea. Trace carefully throughout the essay the ways in which Chesterton develops the idea
12. In paragraph 7 Chesterton uses a series of analogies in the latter part to emphasize a point. Are these analogies effective? Do they depend on anything but logic for their effectiveness?

### FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Is Chesterton justified in his belief in the power of religion to help men live fruitful lives? What evidence is there on this point?
2. Does the fact that many men respond deeply to religious impulses necessarily demonstrate that the tenets of religion are true?
- 3 Does the fact that scepticism often does not lead to accomplishment necessarily demonstrate that scepticism is bad?
- 4 Does science normally lead to scepticism and lack of accomplishment? Is scepticism a necessary part of scientific method?
- 5 Chesterton ends his essay (written in 1931) with the words "we are once more in the morning of the world." Have events of the last twenty five years supported this judgment? Discuss the effects, if any, of these events on Chesterton's argument.

### TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 A practical philosophy of marriage.
2. Who are the fittest to survive?

- 3 The values of Christianity
- 4 The values of scepticism
- 5 The dangers of popularization
- 6 Religion is (or is not) the only sound basis for ethics

## ALAN PATON

born 1903 a South African writer was educated at Natal University. He has been principal of a reformatory for boys and has worked in a tuberculosis settlement in Natal. His great interest in the native population of South Africa is reflected in his two well known novels *Cry, the Beloved Country!* and *Too Late the Phalarope* [Reprinted with the permission of the publishers from *Religious Faith and World Culture* edited by Dr A. William Loos, Copyright 1951 by Church Peace Union. Published by Prentice Hall Inc.]

# Religious Faith and Human Brotherhood

## I

The commandment to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind is a commandment to man to know his own created nature, to be humble before that which is holy, to love it, worship it, and obey it. One of the deepest marks of the Christian is this humility before the holy, so that if he become arrogant in dispute with his neighbor, it should be sufficient that recalling, if only for a moment, that he and his neighbor are creatures, he would at once and with shame desist from his arrogance. Therefore the second commandment, the moral commandment, that thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, proceeds at once from the first, and the very core of it is this veneration for something that resides in the creature, which we may call personality, and which is from the Creator. This veneration for personality must apply equally to oneself, so that one cannot excuse an immorality on the grounds that it does no harm to anyone but oneself, nor may one, in the belief that this is Christian humility, consent to any violation of one's own personality by others. For Christian humility is not a consenting to be violated or possessed, it is a refusal to violate or possess any human creature.

This veneration of personality, in others and in oneself, is at one and the same time both the root and the flower of morality. Seen as flower, it is frail and perishable, and may be plucked by any careless hand, and

thrown down to wither, but seen as root, it is grounded in our nature, and has proceeded from the Creator. Thus when men are immoral, whatever they change they do not change their moral nature. It is often said of some person that he has 'thrown off' morality, he may have thrown off the yoke of some law or convention, but morality he cannot throw off, it being a hunger of the soul as truly as any hunger of the flesh, and, when unsatisfied, as destructive of his peace.

We are sometimes indeed inclined to fear overmuch, when there is a loosening of social morality, that the human race will lose some outpost dearly gained, never to be recovered, and will fall back in general and disorderly retreat to some unspeakable condition. But this is to doubt, not only the power of God in Heaven, but His power concealed in our created natures, and it is to condemn ourselves, where we should be happy warriors, to die fighting in some abandoned fort, out of grim devotion to a God that has deserted us. The upholding of the good is not man's task alone, God is with him, not only in the religious sense, but also in the sense that there is implanted in man, the sinner, this indestructible hunger for the good, the highest good being to love one's neighbor as oneself. Our Lord, in so commanding, was not imposing a law upon us, He was formulating the highest law of human nature.

We shall, I think, in time to come, recognize that one of the greatest social changes of our time has been the change in relationship between parents and their children. The improved status of women might be considered a comparable change, or as part of the change, which could then be considered as a change in the status of the father as possessor and dominator. Less and less do parents wish to dominate their children, or wish to possess them. What is happening is an important thing, it is nothing short of an increasing veneration of personality, a greater obedience to the second commandment. Some great results may be expected of this: one is that we shall avoid many of those frustrations and repressions that so vex the life of the soul, another is that the child is being freed (even if he fails) to give his loyalty to what is good and right, rather than to what is considered proper or respectable, or what is taught to him out of habit. This voluntary cession of authority may result in indiscipline, and in rude and selfish children, and this need not be wondered at, for we are, in fact, freeing the greatest forces of the created world, namely the forces of personality. This we have done often fearfully, but we should never have done it at all, had these not been our children, had we not loved them, and had they not been part of ourselves. But had we not loved them, then how much greater had been our fears, and how great the chance that we might never have freed them at all.

Bad as we are, foolish as we are, this veneration for personality is really very deep and strong in us. The really evil thing about Hitlerism, which had other faults that are common to other systems and societies, including our own, was that it committed unspeakable crimes against human personality. It was not strange, therefore, that one of the chief qualities of its disciples was arrogance, nor that the desire to dominate should come to be regarded as some gift of Providence, nor that the reluctance to dominate should come to be regarded as a sign of moral decadence. Nor was it strange that men who had come to regard so lightly the violation of personality, should be able to bring themselves so lightly to kill the body. We fought Hitlerism for many reasons, some good and some not so good, but the purest of them all was that we saw it to be what it was, a grave threat to the freedom of the human race.

Now the most striking thing about the war against Hitler was that the really profound changes that took place in the world were not in Europe and Germany. They took place in India, Burma, Indonesia, and the Philippines. It is true, of course, that these changes can be attributed to events in these countries, but it is equally true that they can be attributed to events in Britain, Holland, and the United States, psychological events of great depth and strength, supplementing those that were taking place in the East. Just as the people of the East were growing more opposed to domination, so were the people of the West growing more opposed to dominating. In fact the people of the West were fighting against the domination of Hitlerism, but many of them did not at first realize the tremendous implicit content of their own ideal. That is why I believe so many soldiers in the earlier stages of the last war (1939-45) experienced such a sense of intellectual and emotional liberation, one of the most powerful of all ideas was suddenly seen and accepted in its full implication, and the intellect was thus freed from one of its greater emotional shackles, and the emotions from one of their greater police duties. Indeed, the most striking achievement of war is not its physical destruction, but the sudden acceleration it gives to the spread of ideas. If we have another war, we shall see the further spread of powerful ideas, the most powerful of all being those that relate to the freedom and integrity of men, and therefore of their tribes, races, nations, and lands, and the spread of these ideas will not in the least depend on who wins the war.

These ideas and ideals, whether asserted calmly or desperately, quietly or fiercely, in evening dress or in peasant's clothes, have as their driving force a divine implantment. We are here dealing with something prouder than the struggle for survival, in that men will die rather than yield.

When made desperately, fiercely, and in peasant's clothes, the assertion is untiring and unconquerable, and today it is more unconquerable than ever, because those that resist it really believe in it. It will resist any kind of domination over human personality, whether it be of tyrant or law or institution or organization. This resistance may fail temporarily, but it will be resumed, and man may but move from one bondage to another, but he will move nevertheless. To argue with him that he is going from one bondage to another is the most futile of all measures, yet it is taken often enough. This is human life, and it will move and change at all costs, it will burst its way out, even if it is only bursting its way into something else. And it will burst its way out of that too.

For my part this is the only way that I can understand or explain the history of my lifetime. I must say that for me words such as militarism, imperialism, greed, fear, markets, insecurity, Prussianism, flag-wagging, capitalism, communism, are only the secondary vocabulary of war in my lifetime. The primary vocabulary is man, domination, resistance. So it is that man, when he is opposing this undying assertion of the sanctity of personality, either maintains that he himself is in fact asserting it, or resorts to the secondary vocabulary to cloak his actions, and explains that he is opposing something else. It is painful for many of us that this struggle against domination, which has the sympathy of every civilized human being, should become involved with other issues, exposing us to the danger of fighting against something that we would have chosen, and in the past have chosen, to defend.

### 3

This latter page of human history can be read as a revolt of color, but that is only its secondary aspect. It is primarily a revolt of man against domination, against dominating and being dominated. If proof is needed, there are the examples of the white Afrikaner in South Africa, and the changing character of the British Commonwealth.

There can be little doubt that, should there be another war, these powerful ideas will enter the continent of Africa at an accelerated pace. There are already a number of Africans, throughout Africa, who talk of domination and resistance-to-domination and resistance-by-revolution, the number is small, but powerful in influence, and they can be found on the West Coast, the East Coast, and the cities of South Africa. As in China, this nationalism will use communism for its own ends, and communism will use it. It must be regarded, as one of the truths of this age, that any denial of the rights of personality, any dilution of the principle, any delaying of the recognition, no matter with what protested justification, no matter out of how cruel a dilemma, leads to the spread of communism, and to its identification with liberation, salvation, and freedom.

It is ironical that most of those Africans who are *communists*, or communist sympathizers, owe their ability to understand the modern world to the work of Christian missionaries. It is a cause of grief to many missionaries that so many of their most devoted and intelligent students eventually desert the faith for politics, communist or near-communist, and many missionaries in South Africa blame the white authority (which is professedly Christian—I mean avowedly, not pretendedly) for frustrating completely the desire of young African Christians to serve and uplift their people. Disillusioned, these turn to a tougher creed, which describes Christian humility and patience as the most deadly enemies of reform and progress. They say that the Church has gone so far in accommodating itself to the temporal authority, and is so meek before it, so far seduced by the pleasures and comforts of the world, so afraid of the highly inconvenient and totally uncomfortable event of the Cross, that it can no longer be the home of those who long for the reform of society. They say that the *other-worldliness* of the Church, even its *unworldliness*, even the gentleness and piety and sambliness that some of its members achieve, are nothing but the signs of its fear of the present world, and that its bowings and kneelings are safe substitutes for that true obedience of the soul, which may lead to suffering and death. Above all, they point to the white members of the Church, who however much they disapprove of the laws and arrangements of their society and the disabilities under which Africans live, yet consent to live in that society and to enjoy every luxury and advantage which those laws and arrangements afford them. Lastly, they say, what would Jesus have done if he had lived in Africa? Therefore, they say, let men look to something else less accommodating, more uncompromising, which alone has power to break the chains of tradition and authority, namely the revolution.

That is a savage indictment, today when read it sinks into the heart, *humbling and shaming*, tomorrow it seems bitter and exaggerated, the day after tomorrow it is rank communism. And because it is communism, let it be fought tooth and nail, and let religion add its resources to those of authority, and even bless its actions. How clear must be one's eyes, how honest one's mind, how pure one's soul, to judge this all! It is quite true that the commandment is to love God and man, *not to reform society*. But the world looks (or does it not look any more?) to see what this love does.

I have this very day read a painful letter, written by an American Negro student, urging the President of the United States to send to backward countries

"doctors, engineers, miners, diplomats, and assistants, made up chiefly of darker peoples—but no double talking Christian leaders."

It is clear that this student, whether or not he believes in the 'Big Revolution,' is advocating a secular, scientific, economic revolution, and is contemptuous of the very idea of a Christian revolution. To him the Christian is the supporter of the powers-that-be. Is it true that the Christian religion has lost all its revolutionary zeal? Or that in its anxiety to preserve Christian ideals it has contracted a corrupting alliance with sub-Christian powers? Or that in its fear of the world's turbulence, it relies on temporal strength? So was Jesus tempted in the wilderness. From His teaching it is clear that He considered that there was one power and one alone that was great enough to contain and direct the turbulence of humanity, and that was the power of love, expressed in human brotherhood.

It seems that we cannot escape from this devastating solution, devastating because, knowing the magnitude of the almost insoluble problems of the world, we are appalled and repelled by the magnitude of the solution, yet there are times, in what are called moments of vision, when we know that it alone can be true. Today we know it, but tomorrow it appals and repels us again, and the day after tomorrow we are busy with this or that plan to improve the social machinery.

#### 4

It seems to me, in the perspective of this disturbing situation, that in our earnest desire to achieve world brotherhood we must face hard and unpalatable facts. One is that the revolt against domination is so massive that even those who in their hearts sympathize with the ideal, yet who in the present state of affairs have possessions and interests for which they have no doubt labored and sacrificed and which they are afraid of losing, fear it and resist it. One can, as any student of history knows, advance a thousand reasons why world brotherhood should be resisted or delayed. Another hard fact is that in such a state of fearfulness, reason is dethroned, so that man will pursue the course that is dictated by his baser emotions, even though his knowledge of history and of man's nature proclaims it a folly to do so. In this stage, his nobler emotions are pressed into the service of the baser, and his reason also. If he is asked difficult questions, and is shown his own irreconcilable answers, he will no longer speak with reason, but will shout the great words that will reassure himself: 'womenfolk, children, forefathers, country, religion, and his duty to weaker men.' I cannot speak of other faiths, but we Christians are prone to this. If we are honest, then we must confess through grim and unhappy lips, 'I never mix religion and politics,' knowing in our hearts that we thus deny the Lord of Life.

When we are thus so pitilessly exposed, we might as well go further and ask ourselves what is the true nature of our belief. Do we believe



that there is no God at all, and do we persist in religion as a social habit? Do we believe in God a Creator, but not a Father, Who has a divine pattern for the world? Or do we permit ourselves the monstrous belief (widely held, I believe) which is the rationalization of faithlessness, namely that God once had a divine pattern but has forsaken it? It is in this state that we are most impotent, creatures of despair, and the unfailing proof of our impotence is the drying up within us of the power to love, except perhaps in the intimate circles into which we retreat. No wonder then, that in our moments of vision, we are appalled by the immensity of the solution of love, having lost the power to love. Our only resource is then to return, with clear eyes and cold head, to our belief in the divine pattern, and to offer ourselves in obedience to the divine will.

We shall then no longer be anxious about the part which men of faith must play, nor be ashamed of it, for we shall ourselves be participating, and the creative stream will be flowing through us more strongly and purposefully. How we envy a man who has faith in God, as though it were a comforting idea that he is lucky to have got hold of! But the truth is that he has faith in God because he is himself active and purposeful in his participation.

What this participation will lead to, we cannot predict or boast of, this being of the very nature of obedience, but we may confidently expect it to affect human society, and to work towards the achievement of human brotherhood. It is, as we have seen, a reproach against men of faith and their organizations that they exercise so little effect upon life and events, what can it mean but that the channels are clogged, the minds closed, the souls disobedient?

How is this obedience to be achieved? How indeed, but in ourselves? Not by further activity, not by a further flogging of the doubting will, but by calmer obedience to the Voice that so powerfully speaks to conscience and to mind.

## 5

Those of us who cherish the ideal of brotherhood, and of the oneness of the human race, observe with sorrow and fear the massing of forces and weapons. We have seen it all before, it brings us no comfort and fills us with profound distrust. We feel the urgent need for action, and often do not know what action to take. There is but one action to take, and that is to yield ourselves more obediently to the divine will. For one thing should be clear to men of faith, this is, and can be, the only answer to the question, what must we do? It is obvious then that if we discuss another kind of activity, if we ask the question *what must we do under these or those circumstances*, we are then asking a minor ques-

tion and seeking a minor answer Our greatest resource, our greatest duty, is obedience

There are however other resources, and one of the most important available to men of faith in their struggle to realize the ideal of human brotherhood is that sometimes powerful, sometimes weak, but always inextinguishable and divine implantment in human nature, the veneration for that which is called personality This is the common ground on which the most diverse may stand together, on this ground, if the issue is made clear enough, all kinds of men will stand with us I believe that the greatest skill is required in making clear the issue, and I believe that, where great skill is used, there will stand great numbers on the common ground, because of the irresistible power of this principle to move the human heart Furthermore, as we have seen, this compelling principle becomes so entangled with others (named in what I have called the secondary vocabulary of war), that to strike men at the right spot requires uncommon precision I believe, however, that when this precision is used, and that when the striking is done with skill, so that when men are accused they are not more angry than ashamed, and not more ashamed than penitent, then we may expect help from many and unexpected quarters

But religious men, and especially those who belong to religious organizations, have yet another great resource and responsibility That is, of course, to make their own organization a living example of brotherhood Now in a world such as ours, the greatest barrier to the realization of brotherhood is color In our best moments, when we see our visions, we know, requiring no proof but that of our own convictions, that if color is a barrier to religious brotherhood, then the religion is corrupt, and its professors are hypocritical and disobedient I have sometimes thought that the realization of such brotherhood, in countries where it is relatively easy to realize (e g, the United States) might have a profound effect on its realization in countries where it is relatively more difficult (e g, South Africa) I have even thought that if matters came to an ultimate crisis in Africa (which almost all white people fear) it might be Christian American Negroes who would intervene, to re teach that all men are the children of God, even white men Therefore, while the practice of brotherhood may appear easier in some countries, its realization there is all the more urgent in the interest of their duty to the world

In all countries, whether the practice of brotherhood is easier or more difficult, a great responsibility lies on all religious men to assert and to use their right to think, speak, and persuade If prophets, they can protest in the name of God, and if lesser men, in the name of morality and religion, and of thousands of others who think and feel as they do We

have in the revered Gandhi an example of what an exceptional soul can do, but what a discipline of obedience he imposed on himself before he became exceptional!

## 6

A world shaken by Christian revolution and a world contemptuous of Christian inertia are not true alternatives. The true course, which may lead to the first and cannot lead to the second, is for a Christian to give his life in obedience, so that through him may flow the creative stream of the divine. In him the stream of love is not drying up, but is active and regenerating. No matter how turbulent the world, he is not paralyzed by despair, for he recognizes within himself the operation of a power greater than all else. The drying up of love is the drying up of creativity itself, and the drying up of creativity is the fruit of disobedience. The state of the world is hopeless to us when we are hopeless, but when we are obedient, then we have hope for the world, having knowledge of the creative power. Nor does the turbulence of the world fill us with fear, for we have knowledge of it also, knowing that this ferment too is the creative power, denied, frustrated, opposed, but seeking eternally.

But most important of all, we have it on supreme authority that love can cast out fear. It is not enough to understand the meaning of this age, and the irresistible nature of many of its turbulent forces, such understanding does not necessarily cast out fear, nor prevent us from embarking on costly and dangerous plans that have no hope of final success. Just as we have freed our children, because we loved them and thereby conquered our fears, just so we can free the world, and release for the good of all humanity, the gifts and energies of its people. Then shall we come nearer to a realization of our dream of world brotherhood. Hatred and fear are the fruits of disobedience, but obedience flowers in love.

### FOR STUDY OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

- 1 Explain what Paton means by "veneration for personality." How has it expressed itself in modern life?
- 2 In what terms does Paton explain the last war and its effects on the world?
- 3 Why, according to Paton, do native peoples tend to turn away from Christian leadership?
- 4 What does Paton suggest that Christians must do in the present situation?
- 5 What special resources does the Christian have to call upon in the struggle for human brotherhood?
- 6 State the central theme or idea of the essay. Do you find it explicitly stated by Paton anywhere in the essay?

- 7 How does Paton use the idea of respect for personality in the development of his essay? The modern attitude toward children?
- 8 What is the function of Section 6? Is it effective?
- 9 Is the title well chosen to indicate the contents of the essay? How does it do so?
- 10 What assumptions has Paton made about the beliefs of his readers? If these assumptions are not true for certain readers, how would this fact be likely to affect the reaction of these readers to the essay?

## FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Judging from your own experience and observation, how *satisfactory* do you think the relations between children and parents are today?
- 2 To what degree do you think that Paton's analysis of the world situation is an oversimplification?
- 3 In what ways can one show respect for human personality in daily life?
- 4 If large masses of men are not Christians—or only nominal Christians—can Paton's suggestions have any practical effectiveness?
- 5 How does the Negro problem in the United States affect our position in the world?

## TOPICS FOR WRITING

- 1 A confession of faith
- 2 Brotherhood begins at home
- 3 Why I believe in God
- 4 Man's inhumanity to man.
- 5 Respect for personality in college life.

## 19 MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT CAN HELP US TRANSLATE THE INITIAL ILLUSIONS OF LOVE INTO REALITY

We all realize how difficult it is to help a person we do not know. The desire to guarantee the welfare of someone we love can therefore be effective only if we really know what makes him happy. This means that we must permit the person we love enough freedom of expression for us to find this out. Contrary to the belief that familiarity breeds contempt, we cannot become familiar enough with our marital partner. One of the big tasks of marriage is to learn to admire and respect this person rather than the partly fictitious one with whom we originally fell in love. When people fail to do this, they easily become bored in each other's presence. They lose whatever sympathy, understanding, and satisfaction they originally derived from each other. Once self expression is blocked, they are prone to become critical of each other. Being drawn apart in this manner, they may periodically try to find their love once again in terms of its earliest expression. Their years of familiarity, however, have already dissolved most of the novelty and mystery of their original love. Unless they honestly and courageously face the shortcomings of their present relationship, they will inevitably feel trapped by the discovery that they cannot start over again. On the other hand, when differences in attitude are respected and self expression is enjoyed, husband and wife feel that they now have something their early love presumed but had actually not included. They may appreciate the memories of their early love but they feel little need to return to it. They have so much more now that, in retrospect, they feel as though they were strangers then. They find their love in many facets of their lives rather than the few with which they started their marriage. Love may not be expressed so powerfully as it once was, but it is expressed far more often in every bit of attention the wife and husband give each other. Under these circumstances, they even develop enough security in their relationship together not to feel crowded out by some of the interests they cannot share.

## 20 THE CAPACITY TO DERIVE SATISFACTION FROM LIFE IS THE PRIME REQUISITE FOR LOVE

It should be clear from the foregoing that the ability to hold on to one's love does not depend upon its initial intensity but rather upon how well-equipped we are to handle the everyday emotional problems of living. In the beginning love can be pursued and enjoyed by a wide variety of people, despite their personality shortcomings. The polished, perfumed selves we originally present to love, however, are not the selves with which we are going to spend the rest of our lives. It is our unadorned,